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THE DIAL



VOLUME LXV

NO. 770

JULY 18, 1918

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THE DIAL (founded in 1880 by Francis F. Browne) is published weekly from the first week in October to the last week in June inclusive; monthly in July and August; semi-monthly in September. Yearly subscription \$3.00 in advance, in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Foreign subscriptions \$3.50 per year.

Application for entry as Second-Class matter at the New York Post Office, pending. Copyright, 1918, by THE DIAL Publishing Company, Inc.

Published by THE DIAL Publishing Company, Inc., Martyn Johnson, President; Willard C. Kitchel, Secretary-Treasurer, at 152 West Thirteenth Street, New York City.

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THE DIAL

A Fortnightly Journal of Criticism and Discussion of Literature and The Arts

The War and Higher Learning

The modern state of the industrial arts has got its growth and holds its footing by force of an effectual disregard of national demarcations. Not only is it true that this body of industrial knowledge, which makes the material foundation of modern civilization, is of an international character and that it has been brought into bearing, and continues to be held, as a common stock, common to all the civilized nations; but it is also to be kept in mind that this modern technology always and necessarily draws on the world's resources at large for the means and materials of its work, regardless of national frontiers—in so far as the politicians do not deliberately put obstacles in the way of a free movement of these means and materials. In the realm of industry it is obvious that national frontiers serve no better purpose than a more or less effectual hindrance to the efficient working of the industrial system. Yet in this industrial realm men still argue—that is to say, short-sighted statesmen and interested business men are able to argue—that the nation's industrial interest may best be served by hindering the nation's industry from taking advantage of that freedom of intercourse which the modern industrial system presupposes as an indispensable condition to its best work. So far are men still bound in the ancient web of international jealousy and patriotic animosity.

On the other hand, in the adjacent field of scientific knowledge it is recognized without reservation that political boundaries have no place and, indeed, no substantial meaning. It is taken as a matter of course that science and its pursuit must be free of all restraints of this character; that it is a matter of "the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men," not merely among the citizens or subjects within the nation. That such is the case, that no politician comes forward to advocate an

embargo on knowledge at the national frontier, or a protective customs barrier to serve as a fence against an undue infiltration of enlightenment from abroad—that the national statesmen fail to make mischief at this point is apparently due to the fact that no vested business interest has seen its advantage in taking measures to that end. There is also the difficulty that the international diffusion of knowledge proceeds by such subtle and intangible ways as to make its confinement by statute a perplexing matter.

It is true, something may be done by indirection at least—and the nationally minded statesmen have perhaps done what was possible—to hinder the free passage of knowledge over the national frontiers. They have, for instance, taken thought to impose a restrictive tariff on books and other apparatus made use of in scientific and scholarly pursuits or in the art of teaching; and there are also, now and again, certain restrictive measures taken to hinder aliens from imparting knowledge of any kind to the youth of the land. In all these cases of petty obstruction it will be seen, if one looks into the matter, that there is some vested interest of a business-like sort which seeks to be benefited by these measures of restraint. But when all is told, these and the like endeavors of retardation are, after all, trifling and nugatory in comparison with that voluminous and many-sided restraint of industrial intercourse that appears to be the chief material use of the national frontiers.

Happily, there is no need of argument among civilized men to gain assent to the proposition that the pursuit and diffusion of knowledge is a matter of joint and undivided interest among all the civilized nations; that it runs on neutral ground, irrespective of national intrigue and ambition; and that no nation has anything to lose in

this respect through unguarded cooperation with its neighbors. In respect to this joint interest all are gainers by the gain of any one. Happily, again, this joint interest in the pursuit and diffusion of knowledge is the one end of endeavor which all men and all nations are agreed in rating as the only end of human endeavor that is worth while for its own sake. It may seem a singular state of things, but it will scarcely be questioned on reflection, that this intangible body of knowledge which is in no man's possession and is held as a common stock by the peoples of civilized mankind is not only the most highly valued asset of the civilized world but is at the same time the one indispensable possession which alone can give any community a valid claim to be rated among the civilized peoples. Any substantial loss or defeat on this ground, the ground of what is called the higher learning, would by common consent be accounted the most shameful setback which these nations could suffer; and it is a case where, by common consent, any one's loss is the loss of all.

But at the same time, unhappily, because this pursuit of knowledge is, always and necessarily, of the nature of a collective or joint interest, it results that there is no one class or group of interested persons, no vested interest, which is in a position effectually to parley with the politicians in behalf of this higher learning, in which the civilized world's chief spiritual asset is capitalized. The elements of a political bargain are wanting in the case; and that massive popular sentiment whose pressure can for a time divert the endeavors of the statesmen from the broad and sinuous path of political bargaining is also taken up with other things. And just now, under the strain of desperate work to be done, the material needs involved in the prosecution of the great war take precedence of all else, particularly of all things less tangible. Yet all the while it remains true—and on dispassionate reflection, if such can be had, it will be seen—that this joint pursuit of knowledge which centers and finds expression in the higher learning is the most consequential matter involved in the fortunes of war.

All of which should clear the vision and

determine a course of concerted action for those men who still have the interests of science and scholarship at heart, and whose endeavors are not all engrossed with the conduct of the war or with the give and take of political intrigue. The charge which circumstances impose on these keepers of the higher learning is simply the keeping of the ways and means of this pursuit of knowledge well in hand against the time when sober counsels shall again prevail.

Among these keepers of the sacred flame it happens that the hazards of war have thrown the Americans into a position of peculiar responsibility. Through no peculiar merit of their own they have been elected by the singular play of circumstance to take the initiative and largely to shape the prospective fortunes of the republic of learning. Their European co-partners have fallen into a state of disorganization and depletion, both in their personnel and in their equipment, so serious as to leave them, prospectively, very much in arrears. It is perhaps an over-statement to speak of the European world of learning as bankrupt, but it is also to be kept in mind that the misfortunes which make for its undoing are not yet at an end, and will by no means end abruptly with the formal conclusion of the great war. For one thing, the European community of science and scholarship has been divided into halves between which the war has fixed a great gulf, a gulf so deep and implacable that even for some time after the war it will not be bridged. And within that half in which, by the fortunes of war, the Americans belong—the half which will now have to go into action as a decimated whole—within this half of the pre-war complement the channels of communication have been falling into neglect, the coordination of parts has failed, the local units have been depleted, the working capital is exhausted, and the equipment is falling into decay. In short, there is at the best a large depreciation charge to be written off. And all the while there is an indefinite promise of more of the same, and worse.

To put the case in concrete terms, the German men of learning have been and are going through a very trying experience, to

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choose no harsher expression, and are in such a resulting state of moral dilapidation as should in all likelihood leave them largely incapacitated for sound work in science and scholarship for the term of the passing generation. The visible displacement of judgment and aspirations among them has engendered a profound distrust of their working powers among their colleagues of other nationalities—at least all the distrust which they merit. They are at the same time not being at all fully replaced by a new generation of scholars and scientists, since the war is draining off nearly all the men available for such work as will serve the war, which is also permanently diverting the energies of nearly all the residue to uses that are alien to the higher learning. By force of decimation, diversion, and debauch of scholarly morale—coupled with a stubborn distrust of them by the scholars in other lands—the learned men and the seminaries of the higher learning in the German-speaking world are presumably, in the main, to be counted among the dead, wounded, and missing in so far as concerns the reconstruction now to be entered on in the affairs of the higher learning. Something is plainly to be allowed in abatement of any appraisal of so sweeping a nature; but it is also plain that in the reconstruction now to be undertaken there is no German scholarship to be counted on as a present help, and what is to be counted on in the near future is an indefinite and doubtful quantity. In this respect the German-speaking community is plainly the heaviest loser among all the peoples who are losing by the war, and the loss suffered by the German scholarly community is net loss to the republic of learning at large.

In their degree, though in a less sinister measure than the Germans, the other Europeans are subject to much the same depletion of forces, decay of the spirit, and impoverishment in their material means. The Americans, however, have been less exposed to the disorganizing experience of the war, and especially they still command the material means indispensable to the organization and pursuit of scholarly and scientific inquiry under modern conditions. So that by the play of circumstances the

Americans are placed in a position of trust to turn the means at hand to the best use for the conservation and reconstruction of the world's joint enterprise in science and scholarship.

As it is perchance a joint international interest that so calls for initiative and wise conduct at the hands of the American men of learning, so it is only by a disinterested joint action on an impartially international plan that the Americans can hope to take care of the work so entrusted to them. They have the means, or they can find them, and it is for them at this critical tide in the affairs of learning to turn these means to account unreservedly in that spirit of copartnership and self-effacement which alone can hopefully be counted on for anything that shall be worth while in a joint enterprise of such a scope and character.

As an initial move to this end it should reasonably seem obligatory on all those American schools which claim a rating as seminaries of learning to "keep open house"—freely, impartially, and as a matter of routine management to accord unrestricted privileges of sanctuary and entertainment, gratuitously and irrespective of nationality, to all comers who want an opportunity for work as teachers or students and who give evidence of fitness in any respect for this pursuit. It should be a safe rule, particularly under the conditions of bias and inducement now prevailing, to leave full scope for self-selection on this head, and to afford full opportunity for all whose inclination leads them to follow after the idols of the higher learning.

With this as a point of departure there follows a second step, necessitated by the first—an inclusive coördination of these American schools, together with a large measure of coalition among them. Such a move of coördination and allotment of the work to be done is imperatively called for also on grounds of economy, even apart from the more exacting requirement of economy brought on by such an agreement to keep open house as has been spoken for above. As is well known, though it is more or less ingeniously denied from time to time, the American schools that are of college or university grade have hitherto been competitors for the trade in erudition,

somewhat after the fashion of rival merchandising concerns. Indeed, it is just as well to admit frankly that they have been rival concerns, doing a competitive business in student registrations and in the creation of alumni, as also in scholastic real estate and funded endowments. This academic competition has led to an extensive duplication of plant and personnel, and more particularly duplication in the courses of instruction offered by the rival schools, and in the extra-scholastic inducements held out by each to attract a clientele of unscholarly registrants. It is scarcely necessary to insist that this rivalry and duplication have been wasteful, at the same time that it has engendered an undue animus of salesmanship in the place of scholarship. All of which may charitably be held as well enough, or at any rate not to be remedied, in time of peace, prosperity, and universal price-rating. But just now, under pressure of the war demands and the war-time inflation of prices and costs, the wastefulness of this manner of conducting the schools is becoming flagrantly evident, at the same time that the schools are already beginning to fall into distress for want of funds to carry on as usual.

The present should accordingly be a propitious time for a move of coördination and a degree of coalescence, such as is spoken for above, particularly as it will be practicable on this plan for the rival schools now to cover their retreat out of the underbrush of rivalry and intrigue with a decent—and unfeigned—avowal of devotion to the greater gain of that learning which they have always professed to cultivate with a single mind, and to which they doubtless have also quite amiably hoped to turn their best endeavors so soon as the more pressing exigencies of intercollegiate rivalry should leave them free to follow their natural bent. If recourse is had to some such measure of coöperation among the schools, they will easily be able to carry any prospective burden of providing for their prospective guests, foreign and domestic, as well as the effective volume of their day's work, which now seems an overload.

Such a pooling of scholastic issues would

reasonably give rise to something in the way of a central office to serve as a common point of support and coördination, which would at the same time serve as a focus, exchange, and center of diffusion for scholarly pursuits and mutual understanding, as well as an unattached academic house of refuge and entertainment for any guests, strays, and wayfaring men of the republic of learning. This central would then stand as an impersonal, impartial, communal central for the republic of learning, an open house of resort and recuperation through the season of stress and infirmity which the community of scholars is facing. There would be no implied degree of unselfishness on the part of the Americans in so placing their resources and their good offices at the service of the world at large. They would only be serving their own ends as community partners in the pursuit of knowledge; for they can neither increase their own holdings in the domain of learning, nor hold fast that which they conceive themselves to be possessed of, except in copartnership with these others, who now have fallen on evil days.

More specifically, and as affording a concrete point of departure for any enterprise of the kind, provision should be made under the auspices of one or more such centrals for the reorganization of those channels of communication that have been falling into disuse during the period of the war; for the maintenance and unbroken continuity of the work and the records of the many learned societies that have been falling into abeyance during the same period; and for the keeping of records and the collation and dissemination of materials and bibliographical information, on which the learned men of all countries are in the habit of depending.

The details of this work will be voluminous and diverse, even if it is taken over only as an emergency measure to tide over the period of reconstruction; and the adequate care of it all will call for no small degree of sobriety, insight, and good will, and also for no small expenditure of means. But it is hoped that the American scholars are possessed of the requisite large and sober insight (otherwise there is nothing

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to be done about it) and it is known that, just now, the Americans have the good will of all thoughtful men throughout those countries that come into consideration here. It is also known that the Americans command the material means necessary to such

an undertaking; and any degree of reflection will show that the American community runs no chance of material impoverishment in the further course of the war, quite the contrary in fact.

THORSTEIN VEBLEN.

America's Neglected Satirist*

The historical function of Ambrose Bierce in American letters can be indicated by saying that he was the long inhibited, yet basic and inalienable, part of Mark Twain—a timely and adequate expression of the pessimistic misanthropy which at last, in "The Mysterious Stranger" and "What is Man?" found posthumous release from the speech-bound surveillance of a lifetime.

In setting down this observation I mean something more than a mere conceit, and something less than an actual comparison of personalities. What I wish to record is not any impression of a debt of influence or of inspiration owed by either great man to the other. Neither is supplementary to the other. But there is a sense, important to a grasp of the historical pertinence of both if not to æsthetic appreciation, in which they are complementary. Their generation—more or less distorted and befooled in the work of either, since it led the one to suppress an important part of his attitude toward it, and the other to express his attitude chiefly in truculence—speaks to us with authoritative clarity from their combined achievement.

Mr. Van Wyck Brooks, whose recent admirable article in THE DIAL "On Creating a Usable Past," stops just short of suggesting a pragmatic method to match the pragmatic end sought, would perhaps agree that some fraction of that past usable in the present and in the future can be constructed out of the deliberate synthesis, in one's mind, of contemporary historical or literary phenomena so dissimilar, so utterly opposed, as Bierce and Clemens. What any age expresses to us with the most vivid immediacy is a series of contradictions, out of which we must manufacture our own unity unless we are to go without. The past of English letters em-

bodies itself in pairs of contrasting names—Richardson, sentimentalist, and Fielding, satirist; Dickens, instinctive democrat, and Thackeray, instinctive snob (with a complicating contempt, it is true, for all snobbery less subtle than his own); Tennyson, provincial æsthete, and Browning, cosmopolitan humanist; Meredith, optimist of naturalism, and Hardy, pessimist of the same; and so on. And Ambrose Bierce, misanthropic ironist sticking to his trade, faithfully responsive to the conditions imposed on his temperament by his time, is by this law a natural coeval of Mark Twain, a born wit who chose on the whole to be a humorist, a disillusioned thinker who found it possible to let people imagine he was chuckling—or guffawing—sympathetically with them, while in truth he was laughing sardonically at them.

Now the usable past of Mr. Brooks's phrase, the only immediate American past which makes an adequate tradition for the creative liberalism of the present, is that richer and more untrammeled past, non-existent in literal history, in which both authors would have been left free to be themselves without the penalty of losing their audience; in which Mark Twain could have signed as well as published "What is Man?" and published as well as written "The Mysterious Stranger"; in which Bierce need not have been driven to journalism, political muck-raking, and various sensational forms of modern knight-errantry to capture the attention of a public which simply ignored "Ashes of the Beacon" and "In the Midst of Life." This past, had it existed, might have served both authors as an automatic corrective

*The collected works of Ambrose Bierce were published (1909-12) by the Neale Publishing Co. Boni & Liveright have just issued "In the Midst of Life" (Tales of Soldiers and Civilians) in a popular edition (\$1.50) and propose to follow it with the four or five other volumes best representative of Bierce.

and balance-weight. Mark Twain would have been spared the seeming necessity of his enormous self-suppression and the cynicism of his outward contentment—the posture of an artist who found himself applauded for what he said, knowing that he would have been hissed if he had said what he meant; Ambrose Bierce would have been spared the extremity of his bitterness, which became that of a man who shrieks imprecations because no one will listen to his normal utterance. And Mr. Brooks need not have asked, among other like questions, "Why did Ambrose Bierce go wrong?"

"Our greatest humorists, including even Mark Twain," says Mr. H. L. Mencken in "*A Book of Prefaces*," "have had to take protective coloration, whether willingly or unwillingly, from the prevailing ethical foliage, and so one finds them levelling their darts, not at the stupidities of the Puritan majority, but at the evidences of lessening stupidity in the anti-Puritan minority. In other words, they have done battle, not against, but *for* Philistinism." "For all our professed delight in and capacity for jocosity, we have produced so far but one genuine wit—Ambrose Bierce—and, save to a small circle, he remains unknown to-day." The genuineness of the wit is not more astounding than the smallness of the circle—a circle mainly, so far as I can find, of writers and artists, and containing very few members of the class of professional academic custodians of the accredited in letters. For example, the most elaborate cisatlantic history of the short story, "*The Short Story in English*," by Professor Henry Seidel Canby, reaches its hundred-thousandth word and the year 1907 without so much as the mention of Bierce's name, even among the appended "many below the best," though there are ten solid pages about Bret Harte and forty-three index references to him. This eminent representative of the "Puritan majority" on its academic side helps prove Mr. Mencken's case, and justify Mr. Mencken's rancor, when he says that "Bret Harte was certainly not the author of the best English stories of the nineteenth century, but it is a question whether, on the whole, his tales

have not been the most widely read." When acknowledged authority sets out so frankly as this to turn criticism from a search for distinction into the recorded vote of a majority which reads Harte and is oblivious of Bierce, I do not see how we are to revile Mr. Mencken for naming us "a commonwealth of peasants and small traders, a paradise of the third-rate," and for saying that our national philosophy is "almost wholly unchecked by the more sophisticated and civilized ideas of an aristocracy."

It is the function of such more civilized ideas that Ambrose Bierce discharges in his generation; and nearly all of his most salient qualities derive their saliency from the fact that he who exhibited them was the aristocrat half extinguished in the mob, half inflamed by it. All that is most graceful in his acceptance of life and in his expression of it is a product of his innate aristocracy; and all that is most graceless, vociferous, exaggerated, and raucous is a product of the inflammation. For it is not given to the aristocrat to thrive on opposition. It is his business to be a graceful embodiment of a tradition that leaves him free for expression. As a malcontent, he does not shine: it is only the revolutionary who gains in dignity when he answers persecution with articulate protest. Even the satiric mode, in which Bierce mostly wrought and of which he remains the one great exemplar produced on this continent, is protest which has always depended for its success on the existence of aristocratic qualities—such as wit—in a shared, socialized form; like Meredith's "*Comedy*," satire has flourished only where there was a society, however small, of true distinction, in which ideas were at home and had free circulation.

But it was Ambrose Bierce's misfortune to be a satirist alone. His wit, the one brilliant display of its kind in America, and perhaps the most brilliant anywhere since Voltaire, coruscates almost in vacuo; and his animus against the existence of certain realities which he loathed tends more and more to become converted into animus against the non-existence of everything that he valued. Unlike the first Samuel Butler, he found no sharp social contrast

to draw; all he could see in America was a perfect homogeneity of smugness; and therefore, like the second Samuel Butler, he was forced to create fictitious worlds to be the media for his criticism of the real one, as in "Ashes of the Beacon" and "The Land Beyond the Blow." The struggle he reproduces is not that of folly against wisdom or of knavery against rectitude: it is simply that of knavery contending with folly for material spoils, in a world where everything else is crowded to the wall. He is the universal cynic.

Even in some of his best tales of the ghastly and the ghostly, such as "The Death of Halpin Frayser," "Killed at Resaca," and "A Baby Tramp," he steps out of the path of the story to belabor indiscriminately everything he can reach, in sentences like these: "Science had as many explanations as there were scientists who knew nothing about it"; "They had a child which they named Joseph and dearly loved, as was then the fashion among parents in all that region." In fact the most inartistic thing Bierce ever does, as a teller of tales, is to substitute his own plastered-on irony for the inherent irony of the nature of things; and too often he merely rasps where he would horrify. The one thing he seriously and sympathetically believes in is the artist's disinterested search for beauty; yet, because he saw this one thing as outlawed in the America he knew, his praise of it is constantly inverted into disgust and rage at its enemies. He rejects everything, becomes intellectually the most homeless man of our time. In "Ashes of the Beacon," his satiric history of the decline and fall of America, in the form of "an historical monograph written in 4930" by a savant living under a monarchy, he riddles one after another the bases, the customs and institutions, the traditions and the hopes of our Western experiment in democracy—but he also riddles his own assumed point of view, for the posture of his imagined historian is one of bootlicking servility to a king. Under "self-government" the successful individual is a knave; under a government by authority imposed, he is a sycophant. This is the choice which Ambrose Bierce saw. But he did not take his choice: he despised and hated both halves

of the alternative and got on as best he could with art and friendship.

Even of the struggle in which he had served gloriously and shed his own blood, he said in the end:

I know what uniform I wore—
O, that I knew which side I fought for!

He writes some of the most glorious pictures of battle in our language—witness the sketch called "What I Saw of Antietam"—and he also writes:

somewhat lamely the conception runs
Of a brass-buttoned Jesus, firing guns.

He reviles Oscar Wilde; he writes an admirable defiance of the post-mortem critics of Ingersoll. By his mere aversions, you can prove him on the side of the strong against the weak, also on that of the weak against the strong; for Philistinism, and also against it; a friend of freedom, and a friend of tyrants. For his aversions cover everything.

His eyes were so untrained and dim
All politics, religions,
Arts, sciences, appeared to him
But modes of plucking pigeons.

A born fighter, he finds in his generation no hopeful cause clear enough or illustrious enough to claim all his fighting energy. Therefore he vents his rage on little things, such as the human liking for dogs, which he loathes as some men do snakes. And he comes out of all his lesser battles the perfect cynic, the complete misanthropist.

There is the threat of tragic unfulfillment in the very composition of the man: a mind of first-rate clarity encompassed by the mediocre and the futile, and achieving a stoic resignation, but mismatched with a temperament to which resignation was forever impossible. Surveying life without illusion, he knew that his fighting was vain; being himself, he could but fight the harder. He was denied a great thing, the hope that his two aristocratic divinities, reason and beauty, could ever prevail with the mass of men. But he won, and kept, the greatest thing of all; for he knew that reason was reason whatever multitude preferred folly, and that beauty was beautiful whoever had no eyes in his head. History and his own make-up may partly have thwarted his utility as the social satirist of Philistia; but he paid in full the debt to himself.

It is in the fight for his own identity, and

in the aristocratic graces thereby exhibited, that he becomes unsurpassed and, during our time, unequaled. We are all part of a regimen which puts its premium on our common qualities and subtly encourages us to sink our differences. Ambrose Bierce stood almost alone in holding that our individual non-conformity is the one thing worth expression, because through it alone can we make any contribution to the common stock. He fought for his differences; and the gaiety and gallantry of his onset restore to satire its old heroic kinship with knight-errantry and the personal duel. Our coldly intellectual modern charity for everything seemed to him sterile, non-creative; and if he is in one sense unmodern it is because, with Lucian and Juvenal, Dryden and Pope, Swift and Voltaire, he chose to explore the possibilities of hate as a form of creative energy. He is a magnificent barbarian in whom the joy of battle replaces the joy which other artists have taken in their fellow men. His hate is in itself excoriating, terrible, monstrous; his sense of life is, at its sweetest, bitter-sweet, and at its bitterest more bitter than gall. But, after all, the most momentous thing in him, and the most memorable, is an artist's exultation in his art, in the polish and the unique precision of his weapons, in the lightning gleam of his own sword of wit. The fact that he despises life pales before his joy in wrecking himself upon it. Even his personal victims seem not so much contemptible for what they are as admirably accommodating to have been there at all, exposing themselves to him.

In short, Ambrose Bierce is primarily and, I think, most permanently a certain quality of wit. And his embodiment of that quality is above all a style. His personal style has the species of greatness which is felt as much in a phrase as in a volume; he would have proved himself a great man if he had written nothing more than two or three titles such as "Cobwebs from an Empty Skull," "Black Beetles in Amber," and "Ashes of the Beacon." The marvel is that he can keep up for whole pages, chapters, essays, volumes this fusion of imagination with accuracy into a homogeneous distillate of sheer wit. His precision alone is a constantly recur-

ring thrill. Literature expresses "the virtues and other vices" of an age. Crime is "stupiditate of opportunity." A wind thunders in the chimney "like the sound of clods upon a coffin." A trivial utterance at a terrible moment makes the situation more ghastly, "as the fire of a cigar might light up a tomb." A certain commander is

So brave that if his army got a beating
None dared to face him when he was retreating.

The popular "godlets" of fiction are to Tolstoi as "slugs; their brilliant work is a shine of slime which dulls behind them even as they creep."

And consider, as a final example, what he has to say to these same "godlets"—"these little fellows, the so-called realists"—in affirmation of his own non-realistic creed:

It is to him of widest knowledge, of deepest feeling, of sharpest observation and insight, that life is most crowded with figures of heroic stature, with spirits of dream, with demons of the pit, with graves that yawn in pathways leading to the light, with existences not of earth, both malign and benign—ministers of grace and ministers of doom. The truest eye is that which discerns the shadow and the portent, the dead hands reaching, the light that is the heart of the darkness, the sky "with dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms." The truest ear is that which hears

Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to the other's note,
Singing—

not "their great Creator," but not a negro melody, either; no, nor the latest favorite of the drawing room. In short, he to whom life is not picturesque, enchanting, astonishing, terrible, is denied the gift and faculty divine, and being no poet can write prose.

This is the very organ-note of wit, whereas his epigrams are but its over-tones; they have the same relation to the fundamental that his several hundred "Fantastic Fables" have to "The Monk and the Hangman's Daughter," or to his strange tales of the death which is everywhere in the midst of life. He has surface brilliance, but he has also depth; the gleams shine against a central glow, not against a darkness. The adequate symbol of all his other distinctions together is this distinction of style. Being, by his own definition, a poet, he wrote noble prose.

It is not his fault if there are few to understand that kind of nobility. It is his misfortune—and the more serious misfortune of those who do not understand.

WILSON FOLLETT.

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Nights

London: A War Nocturne

You are a beautiful idol which hides itself in the twilight; you are a queen of faded and tragic splendor, who sits in an armchair in the midst of halls of clamor, watching the darkness descending with a melancholy and plaintive smile.

Autumn and spring are your seasons; wet leaves sticking close to gray pavements, moribund branches, crocuses startling the dull brown of old house-fronts with flame-shot disks of gold.

Under the war-cloud all the races of the earth have come together, to watch beside your altar.

After the golden sunlight is washed away from pale steeples, bathing themselves superbly in the mellow glow of haze that floats over the shadowed and battling throngs that swirl about their feet; after the conflagration of the sunset flickers abruptly between rows of blue-black crouching house-fronts; after the evening star peeps forth faintly, and the movement of rushing traffic, carrying weary slaves out to their suburbs, dies away; then you waken mysteriously, and your garments stir and rustle under the soft caress of the night.

One by one you put on your jewels, trembling with a million reflections.

Taxicabs trail softly red tail-lamps; sombre busses, huge bulks of shadow, glide by; massive vans, their tops hooded, stalk along bearing high three dim golden lanterns; now and then, furtively, the delicate silhouette of a hansom clacks past, like a phantom of dead years. And between them move more erratically, shuttles of the loom, pawns of the chess play, the darting throngs of men. Black shapes shifting and passing; shadowy clumps by shaded windows. Blue or green the lights burn over theatres; brown or green or scarlet squares glow softly in the dark façades. At the corner, a tall street-lamp casts a pallid cone of light to the pavement; the yellow flare of a match lights up a face; and the black jagged line of serrated chimney pots juts out against all the stars of the sky.

Nights also of ashen moonlight you

know, when the streets are empty of all but terror, and the barking thunder of great guns goes rolling and throbbing away; nights of gray pitiless rain, sifting, drifting uncertainly into the shadows, while the huddled throng of umbrellas hurl themselves on the bridges, plashing through muddy puddles that reflect pale lamps; nights of fog and silence, deserted streets, the beat of feet that dies away in the distance; nights of loud wind, with flying traffic and searchlights swinging against the low-rushing clouds. But when the stars invade you utterly, with their calm, passionless splendor, and you sit beneath them in your dress of black velvet burning with scarlet and emerald and orange and deep purple of crocuses and pale blue of hyacinths, troubled with the rapid flitting shadows of fevered, exhausted life, then you are the most beautiful of all.

You are as music to my mind always; a symphony without end and with infinite modulations, from the drone of the street singer, the jingle of coins on the pavement, the shout of the newsboy, the nasal note of concertinas, the jangling clatter of street-organs, the honk of dark jammed traffic, the flung note of warning bugles, the daring crescendo of dark artillery followed always by a strange, menacing silence. You are as music—endless, dancing, intoxicating, maddening, monotonous music. In my heart secretly, unknown to men, I carry with me some of your strange modulations: the bitter glare of street-lamps under the swish and beat of rain, the babble of voices in the gray fog, the swirl of gulls above the sombre Thames, the wan light that fades away above some dim, empty street, like the plucked treble string of a violin, and—a clash of drums and cymbals—the opulent traffic that speeds through blue-lit theaterland at evening towards those brass-studded open doors that let out a flood of crimson or golden light, to irradiate, for an instant, the pavement.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

Our London Letter

It is some time now since any English statesman gave a lift to a good book by a deliberately aimed public or semi-public commendation. If I remember rightly, Mr. Lloyd George recently puffed the works of some lady novelist or other and drove a number of literary critics into the arms of the Opposition, who did not know what to do with the strange gift. He has also made Mr. Hall Caine a knight. But it was left to Mr. Asquith to revive the weighty influence of Mr. Gladstone. In his recent Romanes Lecture, delivered at Oxford, on "Some Aspects of the Victorian Age" he quite suddenly and rather unexpectedly remarked on the brilliance of Mr. Lytton Strachey's "Eminent Victorians" (Chatto & Windus; 10/6). I say unexpectedly, because one does not expect a somewhat academic Oxford statesman, lecturing at Oxford, suddenly to deliver a eulogy of a Cambridge iconoclast. But perhaps I am wrong. After Mr. Asquith's volume of "Occasional Addresses" one ought to have known that his taste and rightness in literature were as indisputable as the soundness and dignity of his statesmanship.

Certainly in this instance his rightness is beyond all doubt. Mr. Lytton Strachey has been for some years the veiled oracle of a small but highly vocal clique who used to announce impressively that when the prodigy did at last come out of his retirement he would bring with him a performance of the most astonishing sort. One knows, of course, what dull nervous books these veiled oracles do produce when they emerge; and I cannot honestly say that I looked forward to this particular appearance with more than a faint curiosity. Nor, I imagine, did any one else outside the clique. I am proud to say that when I read the book my attitude was changed with a shock. I was at the time much agitated with business and was traveling incessantly; but I carried that precious volume about with me till I had read it twice, and never noticed the length or the dullness of my journeys. Even then it did not occur to me that others would be as much fascinated as I, and I was genuinely surprised—genuinely delighted too—when I found this treasure was actually the book of the moment. Mr. Asquith, I understand, has been talking about it in private almost ad nauseam; and this may account for some of the stir it has caused—

but not for all. Sheer merit has had its share in the result.

The odd thing is that neither Mr. Strachey nor any of the solemn persons who have sat in judgment on the book have pretended that it throws any particularly illuminating light on the Victorian age. Mr. Strachey observes that we know too much about that epoch. It is, he says, a vast sea from which we can do no more than dredge up a few specimens for examination. His book, then, is not to be considered from this point of view. It may more profitably be considered in two aspects. It is, in the first place, technically a masterpiece of biographical narrative, witty, enlightening, penetrating, and concise, rivaling the masterpieces of the French writers whom the author envies. Biography of this sort has not been written before in English. It is, in the second place, the expression of a man whose genius and sympathies, equally with his technical gifts, make his view of human nature as displayed in given circumstances definitely a thing of value for the nourishment of the spirit.

The four figures whom Mr. Strachey has chosen for treatment are Cardinal Manning, Florence Nightingale, Dr. Arnold, and General Gordon. All these are, with the possible exception of Manning, persons of whom a definite and somewhat idealized legend exists in the conventional English mind. Mr. Strachey's faults, such as they are, result from an overstrain of the brilliant talents he has used to destroy the conventional images. Skepticism is the proper frame of mind in which to approach a false convention. Mr. Strachey has acted with strict propriety and justice in questioning the view that Florence Nightingale was a miracle of kind and gentle womanliness. He does well in insisting on Gordon's mixed motives, megalomania, and furious drinking bouts. But his attitude also betrays him into the shallowness of suggesting that Newman's sacrifice and tragedy were due to the accident of his having gone to Oxford instead of to Cambridge, and it tempts him to scoff at the best of Arnold's achievement merely because he can see that it led to certain bad results.

It is difficult in a limited space to give any adequate idea of the virtue of Mr. Strachey's book; and the faults which it is necessary to mention may overshadow anything I say in its praise. But its qualities are those of lucidity of

view, close accuracy and conciseness of style, and a curiosity about the mainsprings of life and human endeavor which transcends the author's cynical attitude. The point from which he rises into sheer poetic appreciation is in the sense which he has of the variety of life and persons. The force with which he conveys this sense would be remarkable in a novelist; but in a biographer, who is hampered by only partly ascertained fact, it is astonishing. Mr. Strachey has by this one book given a new turn to the English tradition of biography, and it is for him to carry it on. He has come into the open from the ambush of his esoteric reputation, and it will be a great disappointment if in the next few years he does not multiply the studies of character in which he has no conceivable English rival.

I am sorry to have to incur the suspicion of intemperate enthusiasm twice in one letter, but the fact that Mr. Strachey's book and Mr. De la Mare's new collection of verse, "Motley, and Other Poems" (Holt; \$1.25.), have appeared at the same time makes it inevitable. I hinted earlier that I, with others, looked forward to this volume with eager impatience. I can only say now, with all the calm of which I am capable, that it has exceeded my expectations. Mr. De la Mare's charming "Peacock Pie" was a book a little out of the main line of his development. His new book really succeeds "The Listeners" and carries immensely further the vein of poetry there begun. He is not a poet of the kind that explains God to man, and his command over the heart is not wide, does not embrace all human activities. But—to be detestable in metaphor for the sake of clearness—he strikes on a narrow front and breaks through successfully. He moves the emotions of wistfulness and longing so powerfully as to set the whole heart in a turmoil. By some indefinable method he throws us into a state from which we emerge with our spirits exhilarated, purer, more secure. He is not a poet of great variety. He often achieves perfection of phrasing, though the failure to do so does not perturb him. But within his own range he is the truest poet we have; and since within that range he can produce states of mind so precious, I feel an inability to criticize him or to comment on the ugliness of some of his inversions or on his vastly improved diction. I dare say no more than that this is a volume which produces states of mind worth having.

I shall not be accused of immoderate partisanship for what I have to say of Mr. Edmund Gosse's new book, "Three French Moralists" (Heinemann; 6s.). The book itself is of small importance, but it reminds one that Mr. Gosse is a figure. He has written for so many years and with an agreeableness so uniform and so winning that now he can do nothing, or at all events nothing that will not be accused. He is certainly capable of extreme intellectual gaucheries. Topical events have led him to remark that "war is the Condé's fluid of civilization" and, on another occasion, that he would never open his Goethe or his Heine again. These observations are irritating to those who do not care to regard war as a remedy to be kept on a shelf, however high up, in every political housewife's cupboard, and who do not see why any sane man should be deprived of the stock of pleasure and enlightenment that is contained in Goethe's works, merely because of the actions of people in whom not a drop of Goethe's own blood runs—at least, legitimately. But these things are excused to Mr. Gosse, who is the nearest we have yet produced to the genial French critics, to Lemaître, Brunetière, and the Anatole France of "La Vie des Lettres." I should say that when I was comparatively a child Mr. Gosse was one of the most effective of the influences that led me into the fields of poetry. This may not be in itself a very potent recommendation, but I believe that a great many others would say the same. A writer who very pleasantly tells one of books one will enjoy is a person for whom one cherishes a warm feeling; and this probably accounts for Mr. Gosse's present position and for the fact that one loves him even when most irritated by him. I shall be surprised if foreign booksellers in London are not during the next few months visited by a number of persons demanding the works of La Rochefoucauld, La Bruyère, and Vauvenargues; and Mr. Gosse would rightly regard this as a handsome tribute to his endeavors. His attempt to connect the three sententious philosophers with the gallantry shown by the French armies of today is merely another of those amiable eccentricities for which it is so easy to excuse him.

EDWARD SHANKS.

London, June 18, 1918.

Foreign Comment on Robert Dell's Expulsion

THE DIAL, for whom Mr. Robert Dell was for many months the Paris Correspondent, previous to his expulsion from France by M. Clemenceau, may be pardoned for calling attention to certain facts about Mr. Dell and the interpretation of liberal opinion in England and America on those facts. His expulsion had a much deeper than merely personal significance: it was the last act in a political drama of the greatest importance. Furthermore this presentation may well serve as a general answer to the many letters which THE DIAL has received concerning Mr. Dell—some of them commendatory, some inquiring, many severely critical, but all based on certain misunderstandings.

First of all, Mr. Dell was the accredited political correspondent of the foremost liberal newspaper of the world, the Manchester "Guardian" of England. He had lived in France over twenty years and was known and respected, even by his political opponents, for his honesty and courage and journalistic enterprise. (See, for example, the article by M. Maurice de Waleffe in the "Action" of May 22.) He had to such a degree identified his own with the French point of view that he was sometimes accused of thinking of France's interests even before those of his own country, England. And it is true that on the outbreak of the war he vehemently advocated the intervention of England on the side of France, even writing on August 1, 1914 that if England did not intervene he would renounce his nationality. His daughter is married to a French officer now serving at the front. His loyalty to France has never been questioned.

After M. Clemenceau's revelation of the note of Emperor Karl, Mr. Dell sent a series of articles to his newspaper giving further facts and putting the whole episode in its larger historical background. (It is important to remember that these facts have never been challenged.) As a result of these revelations in the Manchester "Guardian" a debate was begun by Mr. Runciman in the House of Commons on May 16. Mr. Balfour answered for the Government. Briefly, the debate resulted in a clear repudiation from Mr. Balfour on behalf of the country and all the Allies, of any demand for the French frontier of 1841, or of any sort of claim. Mr. Balfour did not give any detailed account of Austria's peace offer, for he really knew nothing

about it at first hand, being in America at the time it was brought forward. But he did state: "If any representative of any belligerent country desires seriously to lay before us any proposals, we are prepared to listen to them."

On May 18 Mr. Dell was expelled from Paris. That there was no doubt of its being a purely political expulsion brought about by the embarrassment caused by his revelations is indicated in the news dispatch in the London "Telegraph" of May 21: "The present drastic measure [the expulsion] has at last been taken in consequence of a recent two-column article in his paper."

Mr. Dell's own statement, dated from London, May 20, and printed in the Manchester "Guardian" for May 21, is as follows:

I have had the honour of being expelled from France by the French Government—that is to say, by M. Clemenceau. It is an honour because of the reason of my expulsion. For I have been expelled because I am the only English correspondent in Paris that has been able to give his paper any information at all about the negotiations arising out of the letter of the Austrian Emperor communicated by Prince Sixte de Bourbon to M. Poincaré on March 31, 1917. The Manchester "Guardian" is, in fact, the only English paper that has given the English public any information about a matter of the first importance which has been fully dealt with by the Italian, Swiss, and German press. I am proud to have been the means of saving the reputation of the English press, and I regard M. Clemenceau's action in expelling me from France as the greatest compliment I have ever received in the course of my journalistic career.

The editorial comment of his own paper on the event was published on the same day:

The overtures of Emperor Karl may have been sincerely meant or they may have been a "peace-trap"; the conditions which he suggested may or may not have gone far enough—they went pretty far—in afford a basis for further discussion. On these matters opinion may legitimately differ. It is a question rather of whether people in this country shall have the materials on which to form an adequate and instructed opinion. And here we think that, in this country at least, we shall be held blameless. . . . We have nothing to regret in these transactions. We acted, as we believed, in the public interest, and our correspondent undoubtedly acted from similar motives. None of his facts have been challenged, and while we regret that he should have to suffer, we are not without faith that in France also public opinion will justify him.

The editorial comment of the English weekly "Nation" on Mr. Dell's expulsion, published on May 25, is:

M. Clemenceau has retaliated upon the Manchester "Guardian," the only English newspaper which published the facts about the Austrian overtures of 1917, by expelling its correspondent, Mr. Dell, from France. Mr. Dell has a long and distinguished journalistic record, and this blow dealt to him and the paper he represents can hardly add to M. Clemenceau's popu-

arity in England. The decision is the more remarkable since Mr. Dell's facts had for the most part appeared freely in the French Socialist Press, and to judge from Mr. Balfour's speech in the debate upon them, they admit of no challenge. M. Clemenceau himself removed the veil of secrecy from these transactions, when he published the Emperor's first letter. His view apparently is that the world ought to know only so much of this episode as he chooses to reveal. Mr. Dell and certain of the French Socialist deputies thought otherwise. Their revelations seemed to the Liberal Front Bench in England serious enough for the initiation of a formal debate, and Mr. Balfour made his reply without either correcting the facts or censuring their publication. Mr. Dell, then, has suffered for supplying material which the whole House of Commons thought fit to debate. Thus the blow is dealt not to Mr. Dell alone, nor merely to the great newspaper which he serves, but to British public opinion. M. Clemenceau's action simply keeps it in the dark.

Even in America, where the whole political and diplomatic significance of Emperor Karl's letter was ignored, Mr. Dell does not lack liberal defenders. In its issue of May 22, the New York "Evening Post" made the following editorial comment:

The expulsion from France of Robert Dell, long Paris correspondent of the Manchester "Guardian," needs a lot of explaining. Mr. Dell cannot be accused of hostility to either the French people or the French Government. A part of a recent letter of his in the Chicago DIAL was devoted to a defence of the Premier of France against rash charges made by American journalists. And in that same correspondence Mr. Dell declared: "I am neither an American nor a Frenchman, but I have been deeply attached all my life both to France and to America, and I believe that it is through France that America can most easily get into touch with Europe." The cause of his falling into disfavor with the French authorities is the information which he sent to his newspaper about the peace negotiations with Austria, especially in connection with the now famous letter of the Austrian Emperor to Prince Sixtus. . . An attentive reading of it [Mr. Dell's first letter about the negotiations] will disclose no animosity towards France or her rulers. Merely, a correspondent of exceptional information and enterprise was explaining what had gone on behind the scenes. He did no more than French journalists were doing. But he, a friendly foreigner, has been made the victim of a "purely political expulsion on the initiative of the Premier." Fancy Clemenceau, the champion and exponent of a free press and of the right of relentless criticism of officials, unable to endure the presence of Mr. Robert Dell! . . The decision to expel him, however, seems petty. It does not accord with our idea of the generous attitude of France. Giving to her own journalists great latitude, why should her Government come down so hard upon an English newspaper correspondent, who had given repeated proofs of his devotion to French interests?

In view of these clear statements of three liberal organs—and it would be possible to quote others—THE DIAL feels justified in believing that in America, too, public opinion will ultimately justify him.

Two Poems

I.

A NEW MEXICO HILL SONG.

Wind in the lap of the great waste places,
Sweeping the cliffs and the sands,
Daring the desert's hot white spaces,
Give me your ghostly hands.
I would dance with you across the hill tops,
Over the depths and heights,
Along the crest where the swollen sun drops
Scattering rainbow lights.

I know the touch of the harsh rock fingers,
The breath of the oak and pine.
I know the peaks where the rose light lingers.
Wind, they are mine, are mine.
Once where the yellow trail went winding,
I heard your whispered call.
Why are you dumb to me,
When will you come to me,
Mad with your spirit thrall?

The tough hill grasses are gray and golden,
The yuccas are white with blooms,
The still, hot sunbeams the lizards embolden
Around the old Indian tombs.
The barren mesas are wanly kneeling
Under the desert blue.
High in the hills comes a presence stealing.
Wind, is it you?

II.

ONE DEMENTED.

White, white stars of the April night,
Bloom-sweet boughs, too magic bright,
Winds and waters, she heard your call
And knew your thrall.
Somewhere under the crescent moon's
Eerie glimmer, she caught the runes
That the sea cries back to the ghostly dunes.
Somewhere hither her spirit flew,
Out of the safe, warm body it knew,
Linked its fire with the fire of you,
Flower and wind and dew.

Softly strange are her glowing eyes,
Strange to us are the songs she tries,
Wild young laughter and groping tears—
Lonely fears.
Beating spirit, the walls are high,
The sea moans on and the moon rides by.
Sad little ghost that cannot stay
Where the star beams play.

ROSE HENDERSON.

Some Morals: From the French of Villon

THE POEMS OF FRANCOIS VILLON. Biographical and Critical Essay by Robert Louis Stevenson. Luce; \$1.75.

In literary criticism there is always considerable temptation to educe a moral; and of the many morals suggested out of hand by the terrestrial career of François Villon the most emphatic is that depravity may, in the third quarter of every other blue moon, be eminently praiseworthy. A many other notable poets have been deplorable citizens; hundreds of them have come to physical and spiritual ruin through drunkenness and debauchery; yet over these others it is possible to pull a long face, at any event in the classroom, and to assume that their verses would have been infinitely better if only the misguided writers thereof had lived a trifle more decorously. But with Villon no such genteel evasion is permissible. The "Grand Testament" is a direct result of the author's having been, plus genius, a sneak-thief, a pimp, and a cut-throat. From personal experience painfully attained in the practice of these several vocations it was that Villon wove imperishable verses, and he could not have come by this experience in any other way. So we have this Testament, this inseparable medley of sneers and beauty and grief and plain nastiness (wherein each quality bewilderingly begets the other three), as the reaction of a certain personality to certain experiences. We are heartily glad to have this Testament; and upon the whole, we are grateful to Villon for having done whatever was necessary to produce these poems. And no sane person will contemn the "Ballade au Nom de la Fortune," the "Regrets de la Belle Heaulmière," and the "Ballade des Pendus," on the score that their purchase price was severally the necessity of forcing a man of genius to occupy a jail, a brothel, and a gibbet. For our moral prejudices fail to traverse the corridors of time; and we really cannot bother at this late day to regain the point of view of the Capetian police.

Just here moreover the career of Villon affords a subsidiary moral, as to the ultimate futility of being practical. Villon stole purses and the constabulary hunted him down, through purely practical motives; and it is salutary to reflect that both these facts are today of equal unimportance with all the other coeval manifestations of common sense. Thus, for example, it was during Villon's lifetime that Jeanne Darc

drove the English out of France and Louis XI established the French monarchy in actual power—both practical and, as it seemed, really important proceedings, of the sort to which marked prominence is accorded in the history-books. Yet the French monarchy is now at one with the pomp of Nimrod; an English army garrisoned the town in which the English burned the Maid of Domrémy, and today a host of Frenchmen die momentously in their endeavor to prevent this army's eviction; but the nonsensical emotion with which a vagabond once viewed a loaf of bread in a bakery window survives unchanged. And when you reflect upon all the practical persons of Villon's acquaintance—the bishops and lords and princes, the lawyers and long-robed physicians, the merchants and grave magistrates and other citizens of unstained repute, who self-respectingly went about important duties and discharged them with credit—you cannot but marvel that of this vast and complicated polity, which took itself so seriously, nothing should have remained vital save the wail, as of a hurt child, that life should be so "horrid." For this is all that survives to us, all that stays really alive, of the France of Louis XI.

Villon, be it repeated, even when he jeers does but transmit to us the woe of an astounded and very dirty child that life should be so "horrid." He does not reason about it; for here, if anywhere, was a great poet "delivered from thought, from the base holiness of intellect," and Villon reasons about nothing; but his grief is peculiarly acute, and in the outcome contagious. It is so cruel, he laments, that youth and vigor should be but transient loans, and that even I should have become as bald as a peeled onion; so cruel that death should be waiting like a tipstaff to hale each of us, even me, into the dark prison of the grave; and so cruel that the troubling beauty of great queens, and even the prettiness of those adorable girls with whom I used to frolic, should be so soon converted into a wrinkled bag of bones. And it is very cruel, too, that because I borrowed a purseful of money when the owner was looking elsewhere, I should be locked in this uncomfortable dungeon; I had to have some money. And it is perfectly preposterous that, merely because I lost my temper and knifed a rascal, who was no conceivable loss to anybody, the sheriff should be going to hang me on a filthy gallows, where presently the beak of a bedraggled crow will be pecking at my face like the needle at my old mother's thimble. For I never really meant any harm! In short,

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Villon's finding, life, not merely as the parish authorities order it, but as the laws of nature constrain it too, is so "horrid" that the only way of rendering life durable is to drink as much wine as one can come by; and there in little you have Villon's creed. It is not a particularly "uplifting" form of faith, save in the sense that it leads toward elevation at a rope's end, but Villon is perfectly sincere in enunciating it, and his very real terror and bewilderment at the trap in which he was born, and his delight in all life's colorful things, that are doubly endeared by his keen sense of their impermanence, are unerringly communicated. Pity and terror—dare one repeat?—was what Aristotle demanded in great poetry, and this Villon gives full measure.

Of the English translation by John Payne, whose version is reproduced in this new edition (without any mention of the translator), the best which can be said is that Payne self-evidently worked hard to make it, and so deserves praise for his industry. For the rest, Payne has not infrequently transmuted the obsolete French into a jargon that was never English, and has but too successfully avoided the malpractice of Rossetti and Swinburne, who "translated Villon" by writing upon Villon's themes some quite new verses, and sometimes rather better poems than he did. Payne certainly has done this nowhere. And yet Payne's critical introduction is of genuine interest and value, so that one wonders by what editorial logic it has been omitted from this new edition, to make room for the essay by Stevenson. Questionless, the favored paper is a bit of very picturesque and justly famous "writing"; but it is irritatingly the rhetoric of a descendant of Scotch Covenanters, of a monstrously clever young Edinburger who cannot ever get quite free of the underthought that Villon was "nae vera weel thought of." And this attitude is intolerable when adopted toward a circumstance which Villon himself is reported to have disposed of, once for all. "When Paris had need of a singer Fate made the man. To kings' courts she lifted him; to thieves' hovels she thrust him down; and past Lutetia's palaces and abbeys and taverns and gutters and prisons and its very gallows—past each in turn the man was dragged, that he might make the Song of Paris. So the song was made; and as long as Paris endures Francois Villon will be remembered. Villon the singer Fate fashioned as was needful; and in this fashioning Villon the man was ruined in body and soul. And the song was worth it."

JAMES BRANCH CABELL.

Lord Acton—Idealist

CORRESPONDENCE OF LORD ACTON. Vol. I. Longmans, Green; \$5.

Every student of history has cause to be grateful for this book. Badly edited and ill arranged as it is, it is full of wise comment and acute observation upon some of the central issues of social life. The more profoundly the nineteenth century is studied, the more does it become evident that its truest perspective will be found in the analysis of such minds as that of Acton. His philosophy bears a fruit we have still to gather. He was the first great political thinker of our time to see the comparative unimportance of any problem save that of freedom. He represents the realization that the negative liberalism of Mill and his school, valuable and instructive as it is, only casts light upon the question of liberty without in fact providing its solution. He adds the understanding that, as T. H. Green so finely saw, no statement of the meaning of freedom is adequate which does not include positive assurance not less than negative safeguard. Liberty is not less the provision of opportunity than the organization of resistance. The central defect of Mill's outlook was the fact that it depended upon an unreal classification of human dispositions. It was right where it affirmed and wrong where it denied. It was too simple to represent the complex facts it attempted to summarize. The great virtue of Acton's attitude was the splendid experience upon which it was based. It came from a man whose learning was equaled by perhaps only two men in his time. No mind has so superbly swept the whole field of organized knowledge as did Acton's. He was not satisfied with the printed books. Manuscript sources in library and archives, the *vale* of some statesman whom old age had rendered garrulous, the tradition some traveler had brought from a distant people, a half-deciphered inscription from a broken Egyptian tomb—all were swept into the service of his priceless generalizations.

Acton is the ideal cosmopolitan. He centered within himself the full intelligence of his age. He knew English political life from the inside of those half dozen salons where alone the truth can be uttered. He could pass from the drawing-room of M. Guizot to the study of the great Dollinger. He knew Favre and Newman, Manning and Strossmayer, Disraeli and Gladstone. He realized, as few have realized, that when the last word has been said upon the play of the great historic forces, the historian must

still examine the play of personality if he would hope to understand. The range of his interests is almost unbelievable. He can talk with authority upon the budget. He grasped the core of the Irish question some thirty years before his age. He made the one defence of the Secessionists of 1861 that is in any degree admissible. He had the subtlety of Newman not less than the solidity of Dollinger. His understanding of foreign affairs reveals the man accustomed to weighing the most imponderable of forces. Though a Catholic, he was the trusted adviser of Mr. Gladstone upon the personal problems of the English Church. Though an amateur, his analysis of the great naval crisis of 1894 shows the man who realizes the interplay of administration and politics. He came into contact with almost all that was worth knowing in his age. He was the knight errant of the Church, the prince of scholars, the best publicist of his generation. He wrote no book that is not a classic. He touched no subject that he did not illuminate. And yet, when the last word is said, he still remains the most tragic failure of his time.

He is a seeming paradox; yet, in the analysis of his environment, he is a paradox we may not deny. He set out to achieve impossible tasks, so that there is a real sense in which he was the Don Quixote of intelligence. A Roman Catholic, with a passionate belief in his church, he set out to convert it to the principles of liberalism. His massive learning did not open his eyes to the impossibility of the effort. Not the treatment of Père Simon, not the treatment of Lamennais, not the treatment of Dollinger revealed to him the hopelessness of his cause. He did not see that to make Rome accept the results of the scholarship he so profoundly revered was to destroy for her the ethos which had grown over seven centuries of effort. He did not understand that to make Rome the mother of freedom would be to make her deny the principles for which she had been willing to betray the civilization of Europe. He believed in freedom as an absolute; but that is to insist upon the central maxim of the Protestant faith. He cuts the root of Catholicism far more deeply than the probabilism of Newman or the hectic impossibilities of W. G. Ward. For if the absolute inviolability of conscience is to be maintained as Acton would have maintained it, the centralization of the Roman system alike in dogma and in government must be at once rejected. He does not seem to have realized that he was inviting a bureaucracy to suicide. He did not see that he was asking the sacrifice of wealth

and comfort and efficiency to an idealistic creed which, from its very nobility, can be grasped only by the highest effort. The standards by which he judged the acts of men and institutions have too little of that philosophy of the second-best which, as Lord Morley has told us, alone can be characteristic of the seeker in political paths. He was too stern, too unyielding, too closed to the baffling complexity of things, to make the necessary deductions for the limitations of human effort. The very Gladstone whom he so greatly worshiped was a past master in that art of skilful and compromising adjustment against which Acton's life was so vehement a protest. The eternal principles of the moral law may be, as he saw, the one security of advance in civilization; but it is necessary to obtain a far greater degree of unanimity upon their content before they can be used as a working criterion of right and wrong.

Nor did Acton leave more than a fragment of that great history of liberty which it was his dream to write. The fragment, indeed, is precious; and one may well doubt whether, outside the golden pages of Tocqueville, there is so much wisdom so marvelously compressed. But upon the scale he planned it the task was an impossible one. The history of the central theme of human endeavor can be mastered only if one keeps to the highroad. Acton found a jewel in the head of every toad, be it never so ugly and venomous. The great library that is the despairing wonder of every scholar, the half dozen references in the letters to Mrs. Drew, the myriad slips that send out his successors upon endless oceans he alone could have charted, make one realize that, as he conceived it, the plan was beyond the reach of the human mind. Many an investigator will leave his bones in the desert over which Acton traveled before the field is even surveyed. To know freedom as the Greeks understood it is a sufficient adventure for a lifetime. A determined isolation could alone explain what was lost when Rome became the mistress of the world. What the church offered is material for a mighty book. The contribution of representative government still remains to be assessed. We have as yet but the footnotes to the history; the very chapters are still beyond our interpretation.

It is interesting to reflect upon the singular defect of Acton's equipment. The passionate lover of freedom seems, for the most part, to have remained uninterested in the economic problems of history. There remains, indeed, the emphatic approval of Harrington's great dictum that po-

litical power is the handmaid of economic power; but the perception that it is above all to this sphere that his ethical canons need application seems lacking in all that he did. Yet it is at least possible that when the history of liberty comes eventually to be written its fundamental chapter will be the slow evolution of the state into a society where the classification of medieval and modern economic structure has been overthrown. Churches are fleeting things beside the permanence of economic subjections. States are meaningless when interpreted in terms of abstract moral purpose. Here, doubtless, Acton only shared the convictions of his time. The nineteenth century is preëminently the age in which the triumph of religious tolerance gave the principle of representative government a unique opportunity for the proof of its value. It was only when the broad content of religious equality and political democracy had been won that it was seen how much remained behind. Those who had earlier grasped this—Thompson, Hodgskin, Owen, Mill—do not seem very greatly to have interested Acton. Things like trade-unionism and the International, men like Proudhon and Marx, do not seem to have arrested his attention. Certain vast insights, indeed, he had; as when (page 189) he pointed out that the concentration of power is the real danger of democracy and emphasized the fact that we can still learn much wisdom from the writings of Calhoun. Nor did he neglect, what is unduly neglected in our time, the significance of the Bill of Rights. He understood that there are certain principles so absolute as necessarily to remain unconditioned. The evolution of their safeguards is the great problem of the next age.

He is at least in a great tradition. He belongs to a small group of thinkers who—like Burke and John Mill in England, like Royer-Collard and Tocqueville in France, like Hamilton in America—sought out the essence of the state. But the real, though unconscious, source of his idealism is the man whom perhaps above all he would have deprecated. It is to Rousseau that his insistence upon the eternal principles of political right goes back. It is the fundamental questions asked by that most superb of sciolists that he was endeavoring to answer. It may with confidence be predicted that in the coming reconstruction of our ideals it will be the response he gave to which men will go in reverence for the splendor of his inspiration.

HAROLD J. LASKI.

Limited Horizons

HORIZONS: A BOOK OF CRITICISM. By Francis Hackett. Huebsch; \$2.

After reading these fifty book reviews I feel quite done up. It is as though one had submitted oneself to a fifty round drubbing, a drubbing not at the hands of a human antagonist but administered by a violently energetic punching-bag. For to every book and writer considered there is an appropriate and stinging reaction, yet if we try to discover some method or even madness in these come-backs, we grasp only air. The real knockout blow which would floor our already tottering sensibility would be the demand for our reaction to these reactions of Mr. Hackett. From punching-bags, no matter how intelligent and alert they may be, one does not get reactions that one can differentiate and talk about. At the moment one meets the hit back as best one can, but the sum of all these maneuvers is not reaction—it is exhaustion.

The first review is devoted to Stuart P. Sherman's recent book of criticism, "On Contemporary Literature." It is always pleasant to read what one critic says about another, especially when their pews are not in the same church. Mr. Hackett is successful in depicting the psychology of Victorian criticism in this country, a psychology which is still in full flower. After we have read this brilliant essay and recalled certain more or less marmoreal volumes of the past, our fancy gives us a pretty clear picture of Mr. Sherman seated in Urbana, smoothly rocking back and forth over those eternal verities which are the planks of his genteel front stoop; of Professor Babbitt in Cambridge, astride a smaller and more spirited rocker, which in its forward jerks and backward flings gives a satisfying expression to the fiery soul of him who is to modern literature what Luther was to medieval dogma; and of Paul Elmer More Italianately al fresco, seated in a wicker rocking-chair which with due restraint passes and repasses over a noble mosaic consisting of hunting scenes from the wise Plato. Mr. Hackett, as I said, is not of the same church. If however his eyes do not, like those of Mr. More, regard the crumbly mosaic of more cultured centuries, he also is occupied with ideas, ideas that in his case appear to have been scratched before breakfast in the thin dirt of a suburban street. Wild-eyed he hop-scotches among them, with head to one side, as good hop-scotchers are wont, and with an agility

which is eager to employ each one of these marks before the inexorable ice-wagon shall have obliterated them all.

"If I sympathize with novelties, it is not for the sake of excitation, not for love of black flowers and green suns. It is because our age is once more a renaissance." This bit of self-analysis from Mr. Hackett's introduction to his book we feel to be correct. The fact that he seldom judges a book from its immediate aesthetic quality, but rather with his eye rolling over a dozen disparate theories, does after all put him definitely outside of unchurched romantic criticism and, however protestingly, in the same steeped tradition with the Shermans, the Babbitts, and the Mores. "The difference between a successful novel of ideas and a successful novel of manners is like the difference between exploding dynamite and discharging a rifle." Here again we see his preoccupation with ideas and theories, a preoccupation which, by the way, goes with his extreme contemporaneity; for ideas, Plato and Mr. Sherman notwithstanding, are the most ephemeral of things. It is therefore characteristic of him that his treatment of Wells should be more adequate than his treatment of more personal writers, such as Bennett. This insistence on what I suppose Wells would call "serious creative thought" comes out amusingly enough in strictures passed upon one whom we should have thought quite sufficiently a reformer, G. B. Shaw. Mr. Hackett accuses him of "disporting rather than exercising his gifts."

So it is a theatre-laugh, not a laugh of corrective comedy, that attends every suggestion of love in "Misalliance." A man in love is no more laughable, really, than a man in a gas-mask. His appearance may be silly, but the question is, what is creating the appearance? To laugh at the grotesque intensity of him is to behave like a child.

"What is creating the appearance?" is indeed the question of a serious thinker and one who should soon inherit a rocker of his own. In the great desert of earnest purpose which is American thought, it were well the cap-and-bells should be shaken, however tinny the note they gave. It is on that account the greater pity that a man of Mr. Hackett's wit and talent should assume the pose and don the robes of the desert sheik, especially as neither the manner nor the dress becomes this engagingly human Arab of the streets.

Mr. Hackett's bias in favor of ideas rather than aesthetic effects is decidedly to his disadvantage as a critic of poetry. Indeed, here I find his judgments definitely unsatisfactory. Comparing the rhythms of Vachel Lindsay to those of

W. B. Yeats, he finds them "ruder" only "in the sense that orchestra is ruder than solo." We wonder what orchestra Mr. Hackett is used to that he should liken it to this amazing megaphone of the Middle West. Speaking of Carl Sandburg, Mr. Hackett says that "these imagist verses are as good as any of their kind." We gather that "imagist verses" have a shelf to themselves in Mr. Hackett's store and that there is a nice assortment of the various grades—40, 50, 60, and 80 cents per tin. Here, as usually when Mr. Hackett deals with poetry, we feel that he speaks to us not from his own perception, but rather from hearsay. In speaking however of Mr. Sandburg's title-poem, "Chicago," his feet once again on a firm familiar bottom, he plucks up considerable assurance and differentiates in several particulars his own opinion of that city from the Chicago poet's. "I am not much impressed by his vision of Chicago" reminds me of an acquaintance from Schenectady whom I once met in the Louvre and who did not care for Leonardo's "Madonna of the Rocks" because the face did not express his idea—or did he not say ideal?—of what the Mother of God should be. When out hunting poetry Mr. Hackett should ride with a tight rein and with his feet well home in the stirrups; otherwise that piebald Pegasus which is his own mount may one of these days give him a bad fall.

Had not an enterprising advertiser informed us of the fact that so very many thousand readers of the journal for which most of these reviews were written ride in Packards, we might have inferred as much from Mr. Hackett's large-print style. He writes at high speed for high-speed readers. If our eyes are filled with dust and our nostrils with the stench of gasoline, we may anyhow be sure that these things pass below the notice of the ladies and gentlemen who motor by. Some of us pedestrian-minded ones however are in the end a trifle—shall I say *pestered*?—by these minutiae of the modern life Olympian. Meanwhile the poor words get twisted all awry and the sustaining phrase is unrecognizably distorted. "To prepare an incident is almost impossible and to present an incident without preparation is to leave out the dimension that makes for reflectiveness." Those who do not mind this characteristically strained use of a "dimension" making for effectiveness will find nothing amiss with Mr. Hackett's style. "Yawp," for so rare a word, appears to be a favorite with our writer. The "yawp barbaric" is all right, but so intelligent a man as Mr. Hackett is should be

aware that a yawp, when intelligent, is a very dreadful thing.

But how splendidly, how like the Blue Danube, this book rolls on and on; and if turbid and silty and at times sputtering, yet how obstinately go-ahead it all is! There are plenty of good things, too, that glint momentarily in the onward rush. Of H. G. Wells: "The little Cockney strides the movement and imagery of the world." And of George Moore: "He thinks that the inadequacies of the gentleman can be supplied by the adequacies of the cad." In a country where the critics are professors and where they so often exhibit the fatuous pomposity of the nincompoop, it is well there should be someone running about, pockets crammed with rockets, and letting them off on all possible occasions and at all conceivable angles. But when he pulls off these fifty celebrations all within the covers of one book, the effect is too much like fifty Glorious Fourths all in one summer. Let him go on illuminating our preposterously solemn journals, but let him not again gather his myriad rockets into one fagot and offer them to us for a posy.

SCOFIELD THAYER.

Labor Recorded

HISTORY OF LABOR IN THE UNITED STATES. By John R. Commons and collaborators. 2 vols. Macmillan; \$6.

In these two large volumes of more than six hundred pages each, Professor John R. Commons and six associates have given to the world the fruits of many years of research. The work is divided into six unequal parts: "Colonial and Federal Beginnings" (to 1827), by Mr. Saposs; "Citizenship" (1827-33), by Miss Sumner; "Trade-Unionism" (1833-9), by Mr. Mittelman; "Humanitarianism" (1840-60), by Mr. Hoagland; "Nationalization" (1860-77), by Mr. Andrews; and "Upheaval and Reorganization" (since 1876), by Mr. Perlman. Professor Commons contributes an introductory survey setting forth the characteristic features of the American labor movement and justifying in advance the plan of construction under which his colleagues have carried out their several assignments.

The treatment of the several periods, naturally enough, varies. Mr. Saposs is philosophical, somewhat after the fashion of Marx, Bücher, and the Teutons. He endeavors to place the American labor movement at the correct point in the general evolution of human industry and he pours the historical materials of the colonial

period into certain economic categories, such as the development of bargaining classes, the merchant capitalist, and early trade unions. Miss Sumner presents an orderly and readable statement of facts about early labor organizations, labor policies, and labor politics—brought down to time and localities. Mr. Mittelman gives minute details as to early unions, strikes, labor politics, and premature national unionism. Mr. Hoagland has smooth sailing in relating the story of communism, cooperation, the ten hour movement, and the beginnings of modern unionism. Mr. Andrews proceeds in logical order from local trade unions to local trade assemblies and then to national unionism and national labor politics. Mr. Perlman arranges, mainly on the chronological principles, a multitude of things from Greenbackism, Kearneyism, and Socialism to the American Federation of Labor, closing the intensive narrative approximately at 1898.

The emphasis throughout is mainly on labor conditions, labor philosophies, and labor movements—to use the language of Mr. Commons. Of these three aspects, the first is treated with the least system. That is, the authors do not pretend to amass the available statistical materials on wages and prices, or the documents, narratives, and laws which give us our best insight into the actual conditions of labor at the several periods covered by the history. They content themselves with an occasional and unpretentious excursus on hours of labor, wages, and economic distress. Their main interest is in the rise and growth of labor organizations and in the changing political interests and economical policies of labor. Their chief documentary sources are the labor newspapers, pamphlets, and convention proceedings. Their method of treatment is objective, fair, scholarly. That they have laid all students of American history and all economists under a heavy debt will be the verdict of even the most critical reviewer. Indeed, the work is a monumental installment of that growing literature which in due time will be made the basis for the reconstruction of American history.

Nevertheless many things are left out that seem to belong properly to a work of this sort. For example, one looks in vain in Mr. Saposs's pages on "Colonial Beginnings" for a treatment of the nature and sources of labor immigration into the colonies, the extent and character of indentured servitude, the kidnaping and transportation of mechanics, the judicial condemnation of accused felons to labor in America, the cruel labor legislation of colonial assemblies, and

the part of the mechanics in the American revolution (see the writings of Becker and Schlesinger). Of course it is easy to criticize an author for what he does not pretend to do, but surely any work that bears the title which Professor Commons has chosen should not omit such fundamental topics as those just enumerated. No amount of ingenious Marxian speculation can make up for such oversight. Moreover it is difficult to be content with the meager treatment that is given to the history of labor during the last quarter of a century. We expect the lazy historian to escape his responsibility for telling us about our own age by flinging out a paltry phrase to the effect that it is impossible for us to know anything about the people whom we have seen face to face; but frankly we did not expect that a trained and learned economist would neglect our own decade and offer as an apparent justification the plea that the facts of the labor movement since 1898 "are so recent that they belong to a discussion of current problems rather than to a record of History" (II, page 521). Have we not the same documentary materials for this period that were used for the entire history; namely, the labor newspapers, pamphlets, and convention proceedings? Why are not Mr. Gompers's activities in the political campaigns of 1908 and 1912 as much a part of the history of labor as Mr. Debs's experience with the injunction at Chicago. A few years ago the historians were insisting that we could not know any history since 1815, that every book pertaining to a later age was mere journalism. They have at last been utterly routed, and it is therefore especially distressing to find economists falling into the error that we cannot write the history of our own decades because forsooth it is not history at all. Furthermore there are matters of perspective which may properly be raised. Why should George Henry Evans have ten pages and the relations of the Socialists and labor organizations between 1888 and 1896 only six pages? Why should the great strike of 1877 receive a fuller treatment than Socialist policy with regard to the American Federation of Labor?

All of these faults, if they are faults, are however so slight in comparison to the great service rendered by the publication of this history of labor that it would be an ungenerous critic who would long dwell upon them. To do so would be like saying to a miner who has found a rich vein, "Ah, your shaft is not straight and your engine house needs painting."

CHARLES A. BEARD.

Certain American Painters

WHISTLER. By Theodore Duret. Lippincott; \$3.75.

THE LIFE, ART, AND LETTERS OF GEORGE INNESS. By George Inness, Jr. Century; \$4.

THE LIFE AND ART OF WILLIAM MERRIT CHASE. By Katherine Metcalf Roof. Scribner; \$4.

In so far as America has produced works of permanent value in poetry it has been in one of two extremes, which are best exemplified, on the one hand, in the boisterous sublimity of Whitman and, on the other, in the exquisite avolations of Poe. The former absorbed life with passionate impartiality; the latter subtilized it in an atmosphere of dream. Our prose writers too, though they never attain the magnificent amplitude of a Whitman, show the same tendency toward an almost violent acceptance of fact; or else, like Henry James, they win their way to over-exquisite elaboration. There seems to be something in the shapeless intensity of our life that makes it impossible for a sensitive person to react to it without losing, in one way or another, his sense of values. We either gorge ourselves on actuality or turn from the table to seek Elysian fare.

What I have said of American literature is to a certain extent true also of American painting, though in this field we find a few distinguished intermediate types, such as George Inness, who assimilated just that modicum of European culture which he could make his own. Far more exponential of American character however is Winslow Homer, who, as realistic as Courbet, was even more drastic in his vision and more masterful with his brush. Like Whitman, he was wholly self-developed and always self-reliant, and sometimes crude in his expression; but he attained a greater selective ability than the poet, he saw more deeply and interpreted more adequately the tragedy in things, and in his later works his intrepid attack exposes the ultimate significance of the object. The merely skilful painters of the sea—Mr. Waugh, for instance—flatter the eye with surface patterns of foam on crystal greens; but for Homer the foam had just the same subsidiary meaning that it has for Ocean itself, and his eye sought and his hand rendered the tidal volumes of water, the sinewed ponderosity of the sea.

The reaction in the direction of the exquisite is most clearly seen in Whistler, in his whimsicality, his preciosity, his anxiety to be forever refined. Into these qualities he injected a goodly dosage of American bluff. His celebrated theo-

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ries were manufactured to fit his work, to cover its defects and emphasize its merits. A master decorator, he almost constantly lauded the decorative features of painting; and because he was never able to draw with a firm and confident line, he employed (and of course theorized about) a method which allowed him to make outlines recede or utterly vanish under the beautiful tones of his palette.

In looking at his pictures and in reading the various biographies of the man, one cannot help feeling that a deal of his life crept into his work to its detriment, that something of the finical esthete is apparent in the deliberate arrangements, and that—to use his own words—he failed to "efface the footsteps of work." His color is usually beautiful; his patterns, always; and sometimes, though rarely, he forgets his affectations and paints simply and satisfactorily, as in the "Little Rose of Lyme Regis." But it is probable that he will come to be remembered chiefly for his etchings; lithographs, and pastels. He could catch, as perhaps no other artist has caught on copper or stone, the breathless beauties of a moment; and whether his pictures are full of detail or suggest large spaces with the slightest means, they show him always the born engraver sensitive to the limits, as well as to the possibilities, of his medium.

Most of his biographers have been so partisan that their books have little or no value except for the lover of anecdotes. The expression of his spleen, even when it was mere impertinence, has seemed to them the very acme of wit; and old truths arrayed in paradox have passed for profound discoveries. Even his writings, with their amateurish alliterations and needless emphasis, have been praised as literature. His latest biographer however falls into none of these errors. Mr. Duret's "Whistler" is nicely balanced, adequate, dignified. Yet, reading it, one feels that the author belongs essentially to an age that has passed. How strange, for instance, does it seem now to hear that with Whistler's nocturnes "painting was carried to its last degree of abstraction"! To paint, in the quoted words of Gustave Geffroy, "the prodigious portrait of obscurity," is surely not to make an abstraction; nor is abstraction obtained, as Mr. Duret suggests, by leaving "the motive undetermined under a general envelope of atmosphere." On the contrary, those artists who have come nearest to rendering the abstract have used clear, bold, emphatic line.

Exception must be taken also to the theory of criticism underlying Mr. Duret's book, though, to be sure, the same theory underlies almost all so-called criticism of art. He speaks of "a beauty, a charm of color, precious of itself and *distinct from the subject*"; and again, of "*applying* his color combinations to definite subjects." Like so many other critics, Mr. Duret finds it pleasantly easy to analyze a picture and then try to put together the component parts, instead of reliving the experience of the artist and then giving it creative utterance in the medium of criticism. In a work of art nothing is distinct from the subject: color, drawing, composition, what-not are all, in the finished picture, indistinguishable from the expression of the whole idea; and the artist is not, to quote Mr. Duret again, concerned with "the beauty of drawing and brushwork *apart from* the subject represented."

Another and very different type of American is illustrated in the "Life, Art, and Letters of George Inness," by his son. In him we see an absolutely sincere man, impatient of foibles, striving impetuously, reaching with boundless self-confidence after the highest that his mind can conceive, and yet conscious, painfully, of the limitations of his medium and of himself. "Oh, to paint a picture, a sunset, without paint! To create without paint!" he exclaims. "When I've painted one picture that's a true expression, I shall be ready to go." Fortunately that "one picture" was painted more than once.

It was Inness's distinction that the intensity of his feeling and his imagination enabled him, at his best, to re-create, not a scene only, but a season in a scene—as, for instance, in his "Indian Summer" or, even more notably, in the "Autumn Oaks." Before nature he could make only studies; or if he attempted to paint in presence of the actual landscape, he would change his picture with each fluctuating hour and eventually, having passed from one motive to another, find for all his labor but an incoherent mass of paint. Afterwards, however, the sap of the scene would move within him, exfoliate the non-essential, and bourgeoning rapidly, bring forth the finished fruit. The picture then, however powerful the color, would be tonal, since the various elements had already been fused through memory and imagination.

At such times he would care nothing for method; he would paint directly, glaze, or paint over the glaze in an effort to reproduce exactly

what he saw in his mind. Unhappily, his sensitiveness was even more acute than his vision; and he was therefore seldom satisfied for long with what he had accomplished. In a picture which he had called, but a day before, his masterpiece he would suddenly find a new inspiration, and then nothing and no one could prevent him from painting over it again and again—regardless, by the way, of whether or not it had already been sold. This passion for perfection frequently led simply to incoherence; and many a noble landscape was spoiled by his restless search for the unattainable.

His son's criticism of his work is, naturally enough, often over-lavish in undiscriminating praise; and the book is marred by some quite irrelevant efforts to be humorous at the expense of contemporary painters, by some inexcusable typographical errors, and by a verbose introduction by Mr. Elliot Daingerfield. Yet taken as a whole it is one of the most fascinating biographies one may read. The numerous anecdotes are all illuminative of character, and there is such pleasant intimacy in the narration that one gets a fuller and more distinct impression of a great artist and a great man than may be obtained from any other biography of an American painter.

Inness, as I have pointed out, was conversant with European art; and what he took from Constable and the Barbizon painters was thoroughly assimilated and used advantageously. On the other hand, William Merritt Chase, with far wider knowledge and more natural facility as a painter, was able to become only the typical representative of the academic ideal, a master of mediocrity. The number of influences—German, Spanish, French, Japanese, what-not—gave to his work a certain cosmopolitan appearance dearly loved by those Americans who have visited foreign galleries, but they could not give to it the one thing that makes art of real importance in the life of man, the expression of a great personality greatly in contact with the world about him. Many an American wall is pleasanter for the average beholder because of a Chase that hangs upon it; but those who exact of art something more vital than pretty color prettily arranged with facile brush will prefer the bare spaces of an empty room.

The "Life and Art of William Merritt Chase," by Miss Roof, is interesting mainly be-

cause of its description of such art circles as there were in New York in the seventies and eighties. Rather dull and faded they seem today, with their self-conscious effort to be Bohemian without ceasing to be respectable. That they were wholly successful at least in the latter half of their effort the author assures us; and we are content to take her word that "though some of the artists frequented a saloon, it had a different sort of patronage from the present-day New York barroom," and that in those halcyon times "the kind of Bohemianism now characteristic of certain art circles happily did not exist."

The influence of Chase on American art has never been really important, though his influence on American painting is still to be perceived in the academies. The influence of Inness was valuable in helping to free the younger artists from the now notoriously vapid Hudson River school, but is today apparent only in mediocre sellers of canvas. The influence of Whistler dwindled rapidly, and not one painter of distinction traces directly to him. On the other hand, the spirit of Winslow Homer is still visible in our many sturdy realists. Though none of them has approached the tragic austerity and finality of his marines, many of them see with an equally unflinching eye and paint with a similar breadth.

The most significant painting in America, as elsewhere, has today passed beyond realism. What it may attain is perhaps best seen in the later works of Arthur B. Davies. Exquisite, but never finical, a dreamer rendering perfectly his treasurable dreams, he painted for twenty years or so, with profound knowledge, in singing line and modulated color, a personal vision of life as it revealed itself in the fairy land of his imagination. But today he no longer withdraws into himself; and if he now departs from actuality as men see it, he does so not because the forms of his imagining are lovelier than those of nature, but because he has seen and abstracted the meaning of forms and must remain faithful to that meaning rather than to mere outward semblances. In the result we find something different from idealism, something far higher than realism: we have sublimation through imaginative understanding. Out of so intense an attitude and in such strong adherence to the truth is the greatest art revealed.

BAYARD BOYESON.

Our Chance and Our Duty

THE END OF THE WAR. By Walter E. Weyl. Macmillan; \$2.

THE POLITICAL CONDITIONS OF ALLIED SUCCESS: A Plea for the Protective Union of the Democracies. By Norman Angell. Putnam; \$1.50.

Never has the need for a liberal American international policy been greater, and never has a certain section of our public temper been more hostile to it. Never have sane counsel and moderation in the conduct of our foreign relations been more imperative, and never in our history have our organized press and public opinion been so intolerant and credulous and instinctive as today, when of all times we can least afford to let our emotions rule our judgment. Just how this state of affairs could paradoxically coexist with an executive head like President Wilson, admittedly the most liberal of all the statesmen now controlling the destinies of nations, would not really be a difficult question to answer. Briefly, we have failed to learn from the three years' war experience either of our Allies or of our enemy. We are going through almost the same experience of nationalistic myopia—only on a somewhat more hysterical level—which the other belligerent nations went through the first eighteen months of the war, complicated by the fact that except for Austria and perhaps Russia we are far less homogeneous than any other of the major nations at war and our morbid fear of domestic disintegration (not at all justified by the facts, of course) leads us to extremes of repression. Because we are panicky about sedition and because our Opposition has heretofore been on merely factitious political grounds rather than on vital economic and social grounds, minority opinion has well-nigh ceased to function.

All this is a commonplace of liberal discussion in America today. But it is a commonplace which both the authors of these books have wisely ignored. Mr. Weyl, an American, has ignored it because for all his scholarship and brilliance, his sure democratic instinct, his ability to expose only the salient facts and statistics with a grace that gives light and air to a really massive intellectual structure, he is nevertheless extraordinarily naïve in the best sense—naïve, that is, in being unflinching before the truth as he sees it, without "pragmatic" preoccupations as to how it can be deflected to immediate ends. For I suppose it is naïve not to assume a reading public in conceptual swaddling clothes, not to regard it as recalcitrant chaos with a few stirs of intelli-

gence to be led gently from the lower political truths to the higher, most naïve of all actually to treat it as a democratic intellectual equal. But it is also refreshing, and it requires a certain intriguing audacity. "The End of the War" is the most courageous book on politics published in America since the war began, largely, I believe, because Mr. Weyl completely ignored the prevalent temper of public opinion. Mr. Angell, an Englishman, also ignored it in his book. He, too, appeals straight over the head of the ranters and howling dervishes to the sober second thought of America. His reasons, naturally, are slightly different. As an Englishman with a desire to explain the need for his programme of political coördination among all the Allies, it would hardly be tactful and certainly not advantageous to call too sharp attention to those very tendencies in our present political life which are likely to make his proposals nugatory. He is aware of them—no one better—but his task is more specifically one of persuasion than is Mr. Weyl's expository comment. And he has accomplished it with consummate skill and genuine eloquence. (His wit and lucidity are unequalled.) Together, these two books make the most impressive explanation of the war's real meaning, and the most provocative and the soundest appeal for that kind of political common sense which will speedily accomplish our democratic purposes—in brief, the most indispensable books on the war that American publishers have yet given us. The force of superlatives has been largely lost today because of their abuse; here for once they are merited. These books not only reveal our great chance for a democratic, international victory in the present situation; they point the way unerringly to its achievement.

For the quarrel between those who advocate mere violent military coercion over Germany and those who advocate the employment of moral advantages as well is, as Mr. Angell has so acutely pointed out, not a genuinely basic quarrel between opposite points of view. It arises from the failure to see a vital, yet easily ignored, distinction—the distinction between what is indispensable and what is sufficient. If a man is to lead a happy life, it is indispensable that he should have food and clothes, but it is not sufficient. If we are to have a better international organization than existed in 1914, it is indispensable that there should be a defeat of Germany, but it is not sufficient. Victory alone will not bring us what the common man is fighting

for; namely, that kind of a world in which wars like the present cannot occur again. It is not victory so much as the right use of victory after it is attained that counts. Plenty of wars have been won on the field of battle only to be lost at the peace table. Armies, after all, can merely furnish certain opportunities for the exercise of policy; if that policy is halting and uncertain, military success cannot of itself guarantee us the accomplishment of our purposes. So obvious is this that Mr. Weyl does not hesitate to imply in one passage that, provided there is an agreement among belligerents on a policy honestly looking towards a new international order, a military victory is of itself irrelevant. For the one kind of "compromise peace" to which democrats can subscribe is that peace in which there is no compromise of principle. And Mr. Weyl says bluntly: "The claim is made that the policy of reconciliation has failed. But, in truth, it has not failed; it has not been tried." Had the nature of the Austrian peace proposals of 1917 been more fully revealed when he wrote his book, he very probably would have cited this as an example where disunity among the Allies added immeasurably to the unity and morale of the enemy.

In both the books there is constant emphasis on this disunity among the Allies, this lack of a common political front, just as there was a lack of a common military front until the pressure of the German drive this spring. Mr. Angell cites it with irresistible logic to prove its disintegrative effect upon our own alliance—painfully evident last year, of course, in the defection of Russia and the Italian debacle—and its unifying effect upon the enemy. Mr. Weyl cites it rather in a recapitulation of the four great diplomatic mistakes of last year: first, our failure to demand a common democratic minimum of war aims from the Allies before entering the war on their side; second, the common failure of us all to understand the Russian Revolution and thus hold it faithful to us; third, the lost opportunity to use the Reichstag resolution of last July as a club over the reactionary elements in Germany; fourth, the complete lack of insight concerning the moral value to the enemy of refusing to participate in the Stockholm conference. Time after time our conventional diplomacy has strengthened the worst elements of the enemy. It is too naïve to ask: "But has President Wilson's unconventional diplomacy done any better? Has

he not tried all this, seen its futility, and been forced to declare, as less intelligent statesmen always do, that there is no realistic policy except that of crushing Germany?" It is not that President Wilson's diplomacy is futile, but that it is not accepted by all the Allies in the same sense. For that acceptance, for that integration of our war aims into a common political front, both authors plead. Certainly no half-truth could be more dangerous than the statement that this unity exists today. That we are all fighting Germany at the same time does not necessarily mean that we are all fighting her for the same ends. Have we a common policy about Russia? Do we advocate a federated Austria-Hungary under international guarantees, or the creation of several new nationalistic and self-conscious political units? Do we yet know what our plans are about the African colonies? Are we or are we not prepared to tell the German people that if they revolt and overthrow their present government we shall be glad to treat with them irrespective of the military situation? Do we or do we not believe in a League of Nations? If so, is it to be merely a discriminatory league against Germany, or is Germany to be included in it? Are we prepared to surrender part of our national sovereignty and accept decisions from an international commission? What shall we do about the allocation of foodstuffs and raw materials in the coming world shortage? When we say we believe in a "peace between peoples" instead of a "peace between governments" are we prepared to follow that statement up in actual practice and insist that peace shall be discussed, signed, and concluded by representatives elected from the people as well as by diplomats? There is no definite common answer to any of these questions; both authors stress the danger of going into the peace conference unprepared to answer them.

Mr. Angell puts it this way:

Assume that we obtain complete military victory over the Teutonic Powers, but that at the time of coming to the Peace Table the future foreign policy of Russia, Japan, America, Italy, Roumania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, is all uncertain—as it is likely to be—so that the future action of any or all is not clearly predetermined but guided by interests dictated by the circumstances of particular international situations as they arise. If that is the condition of chaos in international policies (as it has been for generations); if there are no general fundamental principles to which states and peoples are pledged, and in which they have come really to believe, as they now believe in their separate "national destinies"; if their com-

mon interest is obscured by secret bargaining and deliberately nursed national rivalries—why, Prussia will realize, as she has realized in the past, that a military decision in Europe is not a permanent decision, since the forces that have carried it into effect are bound sooner or later to split, to “cancel out” their power by internecine conflict, and so once more give her an opportunity of profiting by the division of her enemies.

Mr. Weyl presents a picture of how the same thing may actually come to pass:

Though it is not wise to borrow trouble, it would be folly to disregard possible and not wholly improbable contingencies, which, if they occur, may rob the peoples of all direct benefit from their sacrifices. When we remember how treaties have been made before and when we regard the types of men who are interested in making the same kind of treaty today, it ceases to appear impossible that the stately peace congress may prove to be a farce. The representatives of three or four strong nations may meet in secret conference and agree upon the essentials of peace while the delegates are noisily discussing unimportant questions. At the open sessions we may listen to an interminable wrangling over minor details, such as whether the Italian boundary shall run two miles to the east or west of a certain point, or a certain rocky isle shall belong to Austria or to Greece. We may hear inconsequent discussions, frivolous claims, and trivial counterclaims, while the real work of dividing up the world is carried on by unseen gentlemen in a quiet room, with telephonic connections with their capitals. Under such an arrangement the Congress would have the speeches and the fireworks while the manipulators would gain the tangible benefits. Those familiar with the method in which our American presidential nominating conventions were once handled will easily grasp the significance of a like control of the Peace Conference.

This is a discouraging picture, but it is what is only too likely to come to pass unless we strive now to prevent it. For given a real political unity of purpose among the Allies, a democratic victory cannot be denied us, whatever may be the temporary military situation. We hold hostages of fate over Germany's industrial and commercial future. She cannot trade, she cannot grow—literally, she cannot live without us. Mr. Weyl is too discouraged at the present weakness of Russia. If Russia were articulate she might say, in the words of Joubert, “In the strength of many there is weakness, whereas in my weakness there is strength; the weakness is in the instrument.” Coercion of Russia has historically been the sure forerunner of defeat. Already Germany has created for herself in the Ukraine, in Roumania, in Finland, and in the Baltic provinces a fund of hatred which, if we do not divert it to ourselves by blundering diplomacy (and it is in his policy this year towards Russia that President Wilson has shown his greatest wisdom

and courage), will inevitably prove Germany's undoing. If we really want a democratic peace, we have nothing to fear. In that sense certainly Lord Lansdowne was right when he said, “We are not going to lose this war.” But we have got honestly to face the implications of a democratic peace. We have got to realize that as in domestic politics the executive cannot legislate of himself (laws must be passed only where the minority opinion is allowed its expression), so in framing the rules of that reign of law which President Wilson told us on July 4 is our fundamental object, we cannot permit merely the executives—that is governments (mere temporary majorities, and in war time often not even that)—to frame the rules for any League of Nations. The democratically chosen representatives of all the peoples at war must have their voice in it if it is to endure. Which means, frankly, that we have got to recognize that nationalism is moribund; that the important alignment is not between nations but between economic and social classes; that the real danger is the danger of a peace concluded on solely nationalistic grounds, when it ought to be concluded between peoples on internationally democratic grounds—just as at the Congress of Vienna the seeds of this war were laid when the peace there was concluded on dynastic grounds at a time when the rising force in Europe was nationalistic feeling. Shall history repeat itself? It is for America to say. The European nations are exhausted and cynical; they will believe in a community of peoples when they see it, not before. It is our privilege and our great opportunity to make that community a reality—our chance and our duty. We may not do it. The cynics and skeptics and reactionaries may ultimately capture our foreign policy. We too may fail. We too may ignore the plain challenge of these wisest of books. Yet if we do, we ought to realize the grim alternative before us. Either we shall get a more decent system of international relations than existed in 1914, or we shall witness the collapse of all freedom and tolerable living in Western civilization. Either we shall get some League of Nations and Peoples under which we can all live with at least a measure of security, or we shall get an era of irresponsible and unscrupulous bureaucracy, tempered only by anarchy and assassination.

HAROLD STEARNS.

Narrative Poetry and the Vestigial Lyric

- ROSAS.** By John Masefield. Macmillan; \$1.50.
ARDOURS AND ENDURANCES. By Robert Nichols. Stokes; \$1.25.
EDOLA. By Frederic Manning. Dutton; \$1.25.
POSTHUMOUS POEMS. By Algernon Charles Swinburne. Edited by Edmund Gosse and Thomas James Wise. Lane; \$1.50.
CHAMBER MUSIC. By James Joyce. Cornhill; \$1.
MY IRELAND. Francis Carlin. Holt; \$1.25.

Ideas are like germs: their dissemination is rapid and uncontrollable, and to stamp them out is always difficult, sometimes almost impossible. Moreover their vigor is frequently out of all proportion to their value. Popularity may not necessarily brand an idea as worthless, but there is some reason for regarding such an idea with suspicion. It is fruitful to examine in this light the long since tacitly accepted or implied idea that narrative poetry has outlived its usefulness and that the lyric method has properly superseded it. Since the time of Chaucer and the Elizabethans there has been, needless to say, a good deal of narrative poetry—one thinks of Keats, Byron, Shelley, Browning, and Morris—but nevertheless in the long interval between the middle of the seventeenth century and the present it is fairly obvious that the focus of popular regard has shifted steadily away from narrative verse and towards the lyric. Is mental laziness the cause of this? One is told that it is too much trouble to read a long poem. It is presumably for this reason that Keats, Shelley, Byron, and Browning are popularly far more widely known for their lyrics than for their more important work. As concerns the relative merits of the two forms the argument is not conclusive.

The lyric began its career, perhaps, as a lyric movement, or interlude, in a longer work. Under the impression, partly correct, that the lyric was, after all, the quintessence of the affair, it was then isolated and made to stand alone. Up to a certain point its justification was its completeness and perfection as an expression of emotion at a moment of intensity. But as a substitute for all that goes to the creation of narrative poetry its test is severer, for if it is entirely to supersede the narrative or dramatic poem it must usurp, and adequately, the functions of that form. And in this regard it may pertinently be asked whether since the days of the Elizabethans the lyric has developed very far.

In fact it would be no very grave exaggeration to say that the lyric method as we have it today is in all fundamental respects of practice the same that we have had since the beginning. The conception of what it is that constitutes the lyric scope has, if anything, petrified. This is particularly true of the nineteenth century, when despite a rather remarkable development of lyric poetry on its technical side—all the way from Keats to Swinburne—the conception of the lyric as a medium for interpretation did not so much broaden as narrow. Did Swinburne really add anything (not, it is meant, to English poetry—to that of course he did richly add—but to poetic method) beyond a perfection of rhetorical impetus, a sensuous timbre of voice? Did Tennyson do more than reset the poetic material of the past to a more skilful, if somewhat too lulling, accompaniment of sound? . . . For any pioneering in the nineteenth century one must turn to Poe, Whitman, Browning, James Thomson ("B. V."), Meredith; and of these the influence has been small, particularly in America, and when felt, felt unintelligently. The popular demand has been great, as always, for the simplest form of subjective lyric, for the I-love-you, I-am-happy, I-am-sad, I-am-astonished-at-a-rose type of lyric, prettily patterned and naïve with a sweet sententiousness. And the supply has been, and still is, all too lamentably adequate to the demand.

It is to this situation that we largely owe the recent renewal of energy in poetry, signalized in England by the appearance of Mr. Masefield's and Mr. Gibson's poetic narratives, and by the work of the Georgian poets; in America, by the issuance of "North of Boston," "Spoon River Anthology," and the anthologies of the Others and Imagist groups. Two sorts of work are here represented; the dichotomy is obvious, but the initial impulse, the discontent with a lyric method which had become practically vestigial, is the same. Messrs. Frost, Gibson, Masefield, and Masters seek renewal in the broad and rich expanses of realistic and psychological narrative: the lyric poets have sought to refine on sensory perception and delicacy of form. The work of such poets as Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie and Miss Amy Lowell falls between and partakes of the characteristics of both.

The group of books at present under review illustrates admirably this tendency, without however fulfilling very much of its promise. Mr.

Masefield's new narrative poem, "Rosas," is a disappointing performance, quite the poorest of his narratives. Mr. Masefield has always been dubiously skilful at portraiture; and Rosas, a South American outlaw who becomes a cruel dictator, seems hardly to have aroused in his chronicler that minimum of dramatic sympathy without which a portrait is lifeless and unreal. Is Mr. Masefield on the borderline between manner and mannerism? It is a danger for him to guard against. His rhetorical tricks are here, his tricks of sentiment too—not so overworked as in "The Daffodil Fields" to be sure; but if "Rosas" avoids the downright pathos of the murder scene in "The Daffodil Fields," it also fails to manifest even fragmentarily the psychological intensity and sensory richness of that poem. The verse is fluent but colorless; the narrative is episodic, bare, and ill unified. In short, we read the poem with very little conviction. Most artists make sometimes the mistake of choosing themes unsuited to them, and it looks as if "Rosas" were the result of such an error. One merely records one's gratitude that Mr. Masefield has not yet abandoned narrative poetry.

Something of the narrative spirit also infuses the work of Mr. Robert Nichols, although in the main it purports to be lyric. "Ardours and Endurances," indeed, is one of the most remarkable of recent first books of verse—perhaps the most remarkable since "North of Boston." Mr. Nichols is young, and one can hardly prophesy of him. At present his style is a rather intriguing blend of Miltonic and new-Georgian strains. The shorter war poems are vigorous, blunt, and genuine; and the "Faun's Holiday," the longest and finest thing in the book, though it is studiously and enthusiastically in the vein of "L'Allegro," can quite well stand comparison with it. One can think of no poet in a decade or so who has come upon us with so richly prepared a sensibility, who takes such a gusto in sensation, or who writes of it with such brio. At this stage in his development a poet may be said hardly to need a theme: anything is an excuse for writing, and with enthusiasm. Whether Mr. Nichols will develop on the intellectual side and use his instinct for word-magic and sound-magic in the articulation of new tracts of consciousness (and that might be considered a definition of the true poet) remains to be seen.

Of the remaining volumes, "Eidola," by

Frederic Manning, is the only one which shows any attempt to change the lyric method, and in his case it is not so much by addition as by refinement. It cannot be said however to be very remarkable. The work suggests that of Mr. Aldington, but is more jejune and precise and very much less vivid. . . . Mr. Carlin is the latest addition to the American Celtic school; he writes with a considerable, though somewhat patternish and time-abraded, charm. . . . Mr. James Joyce's "Chamber Music" is a small book of love-songs singularly unlike his later prose works and rather Elizabethan in quality. Neither this nor Mr. Carlin's book makes any attempt to change the lyric tradition. Nor, of course, does one look for any such thing in the "Posthumous Poems" of Swinburne, which are very much the fragmentary and neutral sort of affair one expected them to be. Will no one ever have the courage to burn a poet's leftovers?

If one finds, therefore, indications of change in the work of Mr. Masefield, Mr. Nichols, and Mr. Manning, one cannot say that in any of these cases it has yet gone very far. They serve chiefly to bring well before us the question whether we are to have a revival of narrative poetry—perhaps more psychological than Mr. Masefield's—or a new orientation of the lyric. Whether or not narrative poetry is doomed to decay, we must hope for two sorts of development in the lyric. In one direction we should get the sort of thing Mr. Maxwell Bodenheim, Mr. John Gould Fletcher, and Mr. Wallace Stevens tentatively indicate for us, a kind of superficially detached colorism, or what corresponds to absolute music; and in the other direction we should get a development of the dramatic lyric, the lyric presenting an emotion not singly but in its matrix, beginning with the situation which gives rise to it and concluding with the situation to which it has led. Indications of this method are to be found in the work of Mr. Masters, Mr. Frost, and Mr. Eliot. . . . If the lyric is to compete with narrative poetry, or to supplant it, it must certainly develop in the latter of these two manners. If it is merely to evolve further on its own base—and it is hard to see any excuse for its continuance as a mere bonbon for the lazy-mindedly sentimental—it must choose the former.

CONRAD AIKEN.

Mr. Bennett Is Disturbed

THE PRETTY LADY. By Arnold Bennett. Doran; \$1.50.

Arnold Bennett is the last man one would expect to find corroded with a nervous cynicism. The inexhaustible master of invention, of the imperturbable flow of healthy spirits, should have been encased against any fraying of the feelings or cosmic doubts. His articles on the war seem to have been fairly blithe in tone. There was nothing in them to show that he was gravely disturbed by events, or that he was not still the same Mr. Britling of the Five Towns that he has always been, living comfortably on twenty-four hours a day, and convincing us by his competent, buoyant style that the heart and nervous system of Britain are still sound.

But when he turns to an artistic representation of war-time London, something less conscious and determined within him seems to speak and to express a war-weariness which his intellectual censor would have suppressed. A story, therefore, which seems at first glance a puzzling and casual fragment, comes to appear a revelation of a profound attitude towards the present state of the world. Mr. Bennett's nerves, as well as his eyes, are at work, and this picture of frayed nerves which he presents comes from a deeply disturbed, though perhaps semi-conscious, state of his own soul.

The story moves around the persistent figure of Christine, "the pretty lady," who has learned her profession from her Parisian mother with almost religious conscientiousness. Her painful life in Ostend with a rich American, and her mad refugee flight to England, have not dislodged the calm direction of her soul. Mr. Bennett dilates almost lovingly on the taste of her London flat, her kimonos, her musical sensitiveness. As the war goes on, throwing London into a moral chaos, filling the young women of position and official virtue—such as Lady Queenie—with a wild dark force of destruction, Christine, soft-fleshed and single-minded, lives straight on below the battle, wrapped in her eternal rôle, concerned only with her flat, her men, her slowly augmenting municipal bonds. Mr. Bennett's ironic point seems to be that in a war-shattered world this patient sobriety of sensuality is a good, if perhaps the one permanence, the one eternal value left. Against this demi-mondaine, the people of the acceptable world loom sinister and detestable: Lady Queenie, vibrant and perverse, dancing (in one of Mr.

Bennett's most brilliant chapters) to the whir of Zeppelins on a London roof, only so to be casually slain; G. J. Hoape, the middle-aged bachelor, who plays his Bach fugue before breakfast in his exquisite rooms and goes out dutifully to serve on war committees; the beautiful Concepcion, who loses her newly married husband and who flunks her welfare work in the munition factory. It is Christine's lover that Mr. Hoape becomes—her major but, to his annoyance, not exclusive lover—while Lady Queenie and Concepcion restlessly try to throw silken chains around him.

These people drag through the book the current activities of the smart and important people of their class—the myriad interests of "war work"—busy, fuming. Yet through this dreary trail is the note of hopeless futility. Mr. Bennett makes them no less blighted in their serious effort than in their play. That bright, smart London society of before the war, so culturally and sexually aware, so feverishly straining to live, is shown not at all redeemed by the new devotion to good works, but only all the more surely fraying away into a sort of neurotic ennui. The one really moving episode is Christine's adventure with the drunken soldier. As a military figure he is curiously shadowy. But his inarticulate need, his forlornness, which is met so unhesitatingly by Christine's motherly concern, is intensely human. She packs him off from her very bed to the front in order to save him from disgrace. In her warmth, and in his deep superstition which bestows on her his grateful gift of an amulet, we are back again at rich, old, healing human values.

How conscious Mr. Bennett is of all this I do not know. The effect is unmistakable however. "*The Pretty Lady*" reads less like a transcript of reality than like one of those quasi-allegories that one writes when powerful but scarcely realized obsessions are dictating one's interpretation of intensely emotional experience. Doubtless Mr. Bennett does not mean to satirize the significant classes in England at war. But his note becomes that of a searing skepticism. A society emotionally sick, playing with futilities—this is the world of the Hoapes and Queenies and Concepcions and their friends as he pictures it. Recurrently he shifts from their jumpy, disintegrating souls to Christine's soft plodding, to the soldier's drunken superstition and clinging. They are the notes of life in a region of moldy death.

RANDOLPH BOURNE.

BRIEFS ON NEW BOOKS

THE CHICAGO PRODUCE MARKET. By Edwin Griswold Nourse. Hart, Schaffner & Marx Prize Essays, XXV. Houghton Mifflin; \$2.25.

This book did not win one of the Hart, Schaffner & Marx prizes; it received honorable mention in Class A. Yet no disappointment would have been felt if the volume had been given a higher titular rank, for it is an instance of the success of these prizes in calling forth competent economic studies. Meat and grain, Chicago's most important food businesses, are not discussed. Produce means "fresh fruit and vegetables, poultry and eggs, butter and cheese." The enormous business organization necessary to distribute these foods to Chicago and its surrounding distribution area, reaching several hundred miles in every direction, is minutely described, carefully analyzed, and judged with reference to its social value. "This great system we should neither ignorantly despise nor blindly worship," lectures Professor Nourse; but in spite of an over allowance of such sententious twaddle about how fair-minded he tries to be, he really seems to have a balanced appreciation of the merits and defects of the present marketing system. The best thing about the book is the emphasis which is given to past attempts and new plans to improve the Chicago organization.

TALES FROM A FAMISHED LAND. By Edward Eyre Hunt. Doubleday, Page; \$1.25.

This little volume of stories is the work of one who was, until our own entrance into the war, choked that really gallant enterprise, with Hoover in Belgium. In the preface we are told that "these tales are not strictly truth, but they are not fiction. They are both." Had not Mr. Hunt definitely stated this, I fancy we should anyhow have guessed the fact. For no one who had not lived in Belgium these heartbreaking times and had not experienced the emotions as well as the outward life of that huddled people could so finely have evoked the spirit of his environment and so obviously have given us the substance of truth. Nor is the presence of fiction less patent. Such an incident as that narrated in "Figures of the Dance" is far too rounded and balanced ever to have happened in this topsy-turvy world; in "The Saviour of Mont César," the conversation of the vellum-faced monk and the word-spitting German lieutenant is too perfect a moving-picture scenario to have been picked up whole even in that time and land. A charming legend of how one Father Guido came to heaven and to complete faith gives us perhaps a keener pleasure than do most of the more timely

narratives, but not more than the story of that old woman who piously tends in her own little garden three graves of German soldiers, praying that "maybe in Germany there is some one who will keep the grave of my boy." In this tale, as in others, the author makes himself a really too conventionally uncomprehending and enquiring Greek Chorus not to irritate the reader.

THE LYRICAL POEMS OF HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL. Translated from the German, with an introduction, by Charles Wharton Stork. Yale University Press; \$1.25.

Those who have long known the work of Hugo von Hofmannsthal, and have admired in him the most distinguished poet of the German language writing in this generation, will naturally be intrigued by this translation of his lyric poems. Their curiosity, however, as to how much of the original elixir can be transferred to new bottles will perhaps be greater than any hope of testing in their own tongue, or of sharing with friends unversed in the German, those delights which have intoxicated them. For this Austrian poet shares with William Butler Yeats a style which is so elaborately elusive and in which, as is of course the case with all unrealistic writers, the sound is so infinitely more important than the sense, that to translate his verses is clearly a work in which scholarship and even real literary ability cannot avail much. More than ever will the easy sounding word "translation" strike one as ironic when "re-creation" is so obviously the task set. With some hesitation, therefore, we open this English version by Charles Wharton Stork. Turning to perhaps the most striking stanza of one of Hofmannsthal's most powerful poems, we read:

From the weariness of forgotten peoples
Vainly would I liberate mine eyelids,
Or would keep my startled soul at distance
From the silent fall of far-off planets.

and to the closing stanza of another characteristic piece:

What boots it much to have seen the while we roam?—
And yet he sayeth much, who "Evening" saith.
A word whence deep and solemn meanings run
Like heavy honey from the hollow comb.

Mr. Stork here shows himself to be a poet and not unworthy the high task he has essayed. Of course all the verses in this book are not equally well rendered, and to those who know the original there must often be in these tortured English words a ridiculous anticlimax. But Hofmannsthal himself, like Homer, is not without his bare spots and to even so gifted a translator we must pardon some failures.

The volume contains an introduction by Mr. Stork, in which he analyzes Hofmannsthal and

his work. With a large part of this analysis one is not able to agree. For the chief point which Mr. Stork makes, and which indeed he recurs to again and again, is that Hofmannsthal is essentially a philosophical poet, indeed primarily a philosopher. "His interest in a given idea, scene, or personality is only for the purpose of arriving at some philosophical conclusion." Mr. Stork even goes so far as to deny Hofmannsthal any emotional intensity whatever. This theory would make of our poet a mere retailer of what Mr. Stork calls "universal truths," a retailer whose talent it is to swathe these nude entities in the flowered damask of sensuous charm. All this strikes one as the exact opposite of the case. If we find philosophical ideas in Hofmannsthal—as indeed where do we not find them?—we perceive that he uses them precisely as he does his dolphins and his Tritons; that is, as tools with which to get an artistic effect. Ideas, as they always should be in art, are a means, not an end. If we do not get "the ring of ordinary human feeling," that is because, as Hofmannsthal himself said to Mr. Stork, he writes for those very few whom only the intensely refined can satisfy.

BEYOND ARCHITECTURE. By A. Kingsley Porter. Marshall Jones; \$2.

From his preface it appears that Mr. Porter regards his book as revolutionary—likely to lose for him "even the shred of an orthodox architectural reputation." But however devastating his radicalism may appear to the effete and academic East, to Western eyes it looks more like conservatism. Yet Mr. Porter possesses the prime requisite for the writing of pointed and inspiring criticism, conviction. His aesthetic creed is firmly held. And it is clear that he has transcended the popular concepts on matters aesthetic, although he still clings to his belief in the efficacy of current art education and in the refining influence of art museums upon the public taste. Art education as practiced at present has no relation to the creation of beauty; while the more art museums multiply, the louder do they proclaim that art is dead. The languid interest of about two per cent. of the population in these matters is not likely to affect the other ninety-eight per cent. Mr. Porter takes Mr. Cram more seriously than Mr. Cram takes himself, for—not to call in question the sincerity of this high priest of the medieval mode—it is well known that his sense of humor can always save him in a crisis. The Bryn Athyn experiment was made possible through the whim of a millionaire, and interesting though it is, it contributes nothing to an architecture of democracy. It is only in the final paragraph of his final chapter that Mr. Porter strikes the note that we should like to have heard earlier and oftener.

The war of 1914 may be the spark which will kindle the art-hating Kultur of the nineteenth century, but the structure was already doomed. There had come a tide in the affairs of men, and waters which had been receding for long centuries had even before the war turned and begun to advance. It seems certain that they must continue to rise with ever increasing force until the hated materialism, individualism, and Philistinism of the nineteenth century are forever washed away by a new art which shall be at once nation-wide and—intellectual.

Mr. Porter's tempered radicalism is both refined and refreshing, but it is too overshadowed by the academic elms. He should read Mr. Louis Sullivan's "Kindergarten Chats" if he would know what radicalism in architectural criticism is really like.

THE HOMELY DIARY OF A DIPLOMAT IN THE EAST, 1897-1899. By Thomas Skelton Harrison. Houghton Mifflin; \$5.

During the years 1897-9 Colonel Thomas S. Harrison, of Philadelphia, occupied the post of United States Consul General and Diplomatic Agent in the old Khedivial capital of Cairo. A diary which he faithfully kept has now been put into print. It is discursive—as a diary probably has a right to be—and it so abounds in details of receptions, dinners, balls, shopping, amateur dramatics, and even donkey-rides, that its title fully merits the adjective "homely." In a brief introduction the author shows that he knows something of the vast political and economic problems of modern Egypt; but throughout the body of his book he makes no pretense of dealing with these fundamental matters. Such slender value as the work possesses arises from the sidelights thrown upon the cosmopolitan life of the non-Egyptian residents of the country, and from the intimate portrayal of the daily existence of an average American diplomatic representative in the East. One may dip into the book for an hour or two with pleasure, but nobody would want to read it through; and serious students of Egyptian affairs—people who know their Cromer and even their Sidney Low—can afford to pass it by.

THE FIELD OF PHILOSOPHY. By Joseph Alexander Leighton. R. G. Adams & Co.

It is difficult to be patient with textbooks in philosophy, twice difficult when the textbooks are for "beginners," thrice difficult when history and "systematic philosophy" are combined in one small book ranging in altitude from "primitive thought" to "current issues." Such a book is Leighton's compilation of lecture notes, composed for classes in the Ohio State University and now issued in print—thirty chapters in four hundred pages. One can understand how such notes came to be written, honest effort at honest instruction. One can appreciate their usefulness to the students in the author's classes, as guides

and crams. One may willingly concede that they offer suggestions of value to other teachers of philosophy—though it would be an uninspired man, in this field, who could adopt another's method in toto. And yet it requires a saintliness to which philosophy is growing unaccustomed to speak generously of such a book. The fault is not Leighton's, or any other author's; it is in the nature of their attempt. For of all subjects (unless poetry be the exception) philosophy suffers most from the dehumanization which textbooks inflict. The passion of the true lover of philosophy is for living thought, and that means, and can only mean, the very words of those who, in the past, have sought truth and whose seeking has been their tuition of their disciples; or it must mean a present seeking by present philosophers whose own puzzle and eagerness shall set the lesson for their pupils. There is something unspeakably dismal—which the profane recognize with ridicule and the initiate with resentment—in the spectacle of the dessicated members of philosophic minds which your textbook presents, a bony and rattling jargon, flesh and blood and breath and life long dissolved away. And why? Is the method one to make philosophers out of "beginners," or to win them to a love of philosophy? Can the incantation of forty *isms* through an examination period give one idea better to live by? Who in a lifetime's study can comprehend the range of human thinking—and shall we plumb it into sophomores in a semester? Lovers of poetry know that poetry is untranslatable; teachers of philosophy must learn that philosophy is incompendiable.

WHAT IS NATIONAL HONOR? By Leo Perla. Macmillan; \$1.50.

Mr. Perla argues that the sources of militarism are psychological rather than economic; that nations do not wage war "out of a finely calculated economic heroism, out of intellectual persuasion of the advantages of war" (this view "has been the Achilles' tendon of all pacifist technique"), but because peoples are moved to irrational action by the sentiment of national honor; that this sentiment is so varied and generous in its attachments that almost any international difference (Mr. Perla cites twice fifty-seven varieties) may become a *casus belli* by being entangled in the national honor; that since the roots of the evil lie in the emotions, intellectual remedies through education will not eradicate it; that efforts must rather be directed to enlarging the scope of patriotic emotions, through a Court of International Honor which shall gradually attract to itself the sentiments of pugnacious loyalty now directed diversely to smaller political units.

The criticism is obvious: first, that the direc-

tion and scope of patriotic attachment are matters of education and example; and second, that the sentiment of national honor is rather an instrument than the cause of militarism, a means used by statesmen to achieve effective popular unity in support of wars usually brought on by ruling cliques suffering from a goitre of greed and a passion for mastery. Mr. Perla overlooks the omnipresent and omnipotent minority. The book is written with energy and some brilliance, and will repay study by all who believe that the peace of the world will always be precarious so long as the sentiment of national honor remains so flexible and vague.

THREE PLAYS. By David Pinski. Translated by Isaac Goldberg. Huebsch; \$1.50.

Since the days of Reynolds and Cumberland the Jews have been increasingly the subject of sentimental treatment in the drama. It has however remained for our own age to present them at once sympathetically and realistically—naught extenuating nor aught setting down in malice—as in "The House Next Door" or the miscellaneous revampings from the Potash and Perlmutter stories. Now also has come the next step in the development, the presentation of the Jew, sympathetically and realistically still, it is true, but with a grim gloom and a powerfully morbid psychology that bespeaks a photographic mind sensitive to catch all the shadows and none of the lights—not even the half-lights—of life. Consider the studies of David Pinski, especially these three dramas. Pinski wants the discrimination to interpret his own negatives. He states the question, but he never answers it—even though the answer be implicit in the very question.

"Isaac Sheftel," the first of the trilogy, stands out from the other two by reason of its early composition, although joined to them by oneness of theme. It is tyro work, a series of well concatenated scenes, remarkable for its lack of plot in the Aristotelian sense, for its brutally individualized characterization, for its blackness of mood, and for its imaginative strangeness of phrase and technique. But it belongs, like Galsworthy's "Justice," with that brood of literary compositions which deny and abnegate the virtue of the human will in its struggle with the forces of environment and heredity. Throughout there is the desire, rather than the will, to do. Never is anything really done. . . . "The Last Jew" is the best of the three plays. Its subject—"not a pogrom tragedy, but the tragedy of a sole survivor, the tragedy of a moribund religion, of a crumbling world philosophy"—is again the pursuit of a vision, the world-wide ideal of truth in thought, belief, and actions. Although an immediate historic value appears in the background of the Kishinev massacre, the actual value of the

play to the Jew, and to the Christian who would understand the Jew, is the struggle of the old and the new, of the simple unquestioning faith and the diverse scientific substitutes of socialism, nationalism, and assimilation. Here again Pinski fails. He states his problem, but he cannot solve it. He despairs at the chasm between the old and new generations. He has no eyes for the intangible network of transfused ideals and traditions which inevitably bridge the gap. . . . "The Dumb Messiah" has a similar but altered theme in its tale of persecution and frustrated ideals of a return to Palestine. For a third time, and with physical torture and insanity as contributing horrors, death ends an unfulfilled obsession.

To the student of literature and lover of good plays, Pinski offers rare craftsmanship, subtle characterization, and exotic style. So copious, indeed, is his use of intellectual pyrotechnics that he sometimes wearies the brain rather than stimulates it. Above all, he lacks catharsis. To the Jew, Pinski presents new and multifarious methods of introspection, gripping statement of racial and national differences, and hypnotic delineation of certain aspects of Jewish life. To that part of the world at large which is deeply concerned with Jews or Jewish life, Pinski shows vivid and vital portraits, which have contemporaneous significance, even when they are Biblical or historical in inspiration. Yet it is questionable here whether the thousands who enjoy Fannie Hurst and Edna Ferber, and who live happily, wholesomely, and energetically, will realize or give more than a passing thought to the birth-right of the Jewish ghetto and past martyrdom. In any case, they will know that Pinski merely photographs, that he never lets in a chink of light to point the way up and out.

TRAVELS IN LONDON. By Charles Morley. Dutton; \$2.

"Travels in London" is not of the "Friendly France" or "Raging Russia" type of book. There is in its eight topics no effort to bring out any definite city psychology. It is rather an interpretation of the varied associations which have gripped the mind of a writer who was also a London-lover. In America we should call Mr. Morley a "fan" because, knowing his city to the full, he was still a lover and still able to find new praise for old beauties. He succeeded in adding a book to the lengthy bibliography of London without overlapping the others or repeating himself. This has been accomplished through a species of portraiture. All the studies are pictures of his mental backgrounds associated with certain localities. These have been well chosen, including a few of the stock monuments along with others comparatively unknown both to Londoner and tourist. The value of such a scheme is

at once apparent: the drawback lies in the fact that backgrounds in London are composite. The images of a sixteenth-century tavern, built on an old wine-cellar which in turn rests on Roman vaults, are, when superimposed, likely to blur. While this blurring of images would be a fault in a classic, Walter Pater interpretation, it finds no such place in Mr. Morley's impressionistic treatment of a romantic subject. The handling of the Charterhouse and the Roman Wall is novel and calculated to excite to a peculiar degree the recollections of those who have toured and loved London. The book contains an interesting memorial to Mr. Morley, who was a nephew of Lord Morley and associated with him on the old "Pall Mall Gazette." It is, at the same time, a short history of the rise of the new journalism in London under Morley and Stead.

RUNAWAY RUSSIA. By Florence MacLeod Harper. Century; \$2.

This book is apparently the little revised diary of a very brave but wholly undiscriminating woman. She arrived in Russia "during the old régime"; she was "there during the inauguration of the new one." So much the preface tells us. Perhaps the "old régime" refers to the Czar, perhaps to Kerensky. Incredible as it may seem, there is not a word in the entire volume to show which. Possibly the Czar fell during the early pages of the book; if so, this was less important than the vicissitudes to which the Astoria Hotel, at which the author lodged, was subjected. Perhaps he had fallen before the book commences: Mrs. Harper does not consider it worth while to let us into the secret. After seventy printed pages there is a casual reference to "the Provisional Government"; and Kerensky enters the picture for the first time in the fourteenth chapter, though his name manages to stray into print earlier along with more weighty affairs—Mrs. Pankhurst, the price of caviar, the quality of wool, the cost of taxicabbing, Botchkarova, the difficulty of assembling a bridge foursome in Petrograd, servant troubles. The book, according to the publishers, "presents the Russian revolution as seen through a woman's eyes." Mrs. Harper seems to have seen everything except the revolution. This is a calamity. The author exposed herself to the most fearful personal risks; all that she has to show for it is a mass of trivialities, gossip, small talk, information of no lasting value. Occasionally a bit of worth-while matter intrudes—but it intrudes.

When one has finished the book one has learnt the most embarrassingly intimate details about the author, but very, very little about Russia, runaway or otherwise. One knows, for instance, that Mrs. Harper bathes frequently, even on trains; that she is fond of cheese, wears washable

silk underwear, smokes cigarettes, dispenses with garters, and is given to untactful remarks, thus: "Upon rejoining my Bolshevik friends, I remarked that it was strange that the dome of the cathedral still remained, because it was covered with beaten gold, and as they had not hesitated to murder, I did not see why they should hesitate to steal. . . . Several black looks greeted me.

After that none of them spoke to me." All this one learns about Florence MacLeod Harper. But the Czar? Kerensky? Lenin? Trotsky? These are flittingly unimportant figures in the misty outskirts of her narrative. The book should never have been called "Runaway Russia"; it should have been called "Runaway Florence."

ILLUSIONS AND REALITIES OF THE WAR. By Francis Grierson. Lane; \$1.25.

Fragments of haphazard thinking, useless to the student but perhaps worth the price to the tired business man who likes Frank Crane, characterize this book. The author has traveled widely and thought narrowly, never having paused, it seems, to coordinate his impressions. After the first half-hundred pages the book becomes a procession of platitudes, with contradictory opinions marching fraternally abreast, the whole culminating in a weird piece—"A Moral Revolution in America"—in which, after denouncing Prussian subordination of the individual and the destruction of originality by mechanical methods in American schools, Mr. Grierson prophesies and welcomes a period of "drastic" (the author's petted word) restriction of the individual in England and America: saloons, cabarets, and Sunday movies will be prohibited; "a ban will be placed on banquets that last after ten o'clock; . . . church discipline will go hand in hand with patriotic discipline . . . backed by inexorable law; . . . laws will be framed against . . . ribald songs and vaudeville acts; . . . all Sunday games will cease"; agnosticism in professors will be forbidden (*verboten* has crossed the Atlantic); and at last "we shall pass laws for the abolishment of big cities" (pages 176-181). There is an interesting suggestion that as newspapers close their columns to truth thinkers will become their own publishers, and the next will be an age of pamphlets resembling the era of Desmoulins and Mirabeau. Mr. Grierson is convinced that individualism has neutralized the initial benefits of revolution in France, nonconformity in England, and Jeffersonian democracy in America; and argues that the plutocratic individualism of England and America, as well as the autocratic militarism of Prussia, will be defeated in this war.

OUR BIBLE. By Herbert L. Willett. Christian Century Press; \$1.25.

THE PSALMS AND OTHER SACRED WRITINGS. By Frederick C. Eiselen. Abingdon Press; \$1.75.

The business of branding as "German" that which one does not like is a favorite sport just now. While vociferous popular speakers and writers of a pronounced conservative type are frothing at scientific Bible study because it came from Germany, it is not strange that from theological schools inoculating students with this "Hellish Heidelberg Heresy" there should come professional efforts to educate an innocent and withal inflammable religious constituency. Both these books bear announcements that they are "non-technical in style, but of scholarly authority," and to read them is to verify these statements. Professor Willett, of the University of Chicago, from the added vantage point of over twenty years' experience as a popular preacher, Chautauqua lecturer, and writer, answers intelligibly and interestingly the preliminary questions that come to anyone beginning a scientific study of the Bible: its emergence out of the religious experience of common folks, its growth, and the influences which gave it its present form. Problems of translation, revision, textual and higher criticism, and kindred themes are handled deftly. Page 116 has a succinct statement of the modern attitude toward the scriptures: "These writings were not supernaturally produced in the beginning, and they have not been preserved to us in any miraculous manner. They bear the marks of human workmanship, both in their production and transmission."

Professor Eiselen has taken upon himself a much weightier task in his book, which is Volume III in a "Biblical Introduction Series." This volume is a discussion of the origin, subject matter, and value of the books called "The Writings" in the Hebrew Bible: namely, "Psalms," "Proverbs," "Job," "Song of Songs," "Ruth," "Lamentations," "Ecclesiastes," "Esther," "Daniel," "Ezra-Nehemiah," and "Chronicles." The first chapter, a study of Hebrew poetry, is a good survey of results attained in this most difficult and indeterminate of all fields of research, but it states conclusions more positively than most scholars would care to do. The short chapter on "The Wisdom Literature of the Hebrews" is well done. Other chapters follow, one each to the Biblical Books discussed. The book is thoroughly scientific—painfully so. In method it is highly pedantic; indeed, it reads like a brief of classroom lectures. To anyone wishing a concise, encyclopedic tabulation of critical pros and cons, and conclusions in the study of any of these Old Testament books, this volume will prove reliable and highly serviceable.

NOTES ON NEW FICTION

Of Persian poets and their aphorisms, and of the viziers and khalifs who sometimes rewarded them with many pieces of gold and sometimes cut off their heads, does Mr. Lucas narrate with dry gusto. One Ibn Kallikan, of the thirteenth century, is his source, and to his biographical dictionary at whose Englished volumes Mr. Lucas "had been sipping, beelike, for some years," he devotes the first half of the present volume, "*A Boswell of Baghdad*" (Doran; \$1.35). He takes his readers with him in these hours of sipping, as it were, even to Ibn Kallikan's charming admission of a misquotation: "I since discovered that these verses are attributed to Ibn Musa 'l-Makfuf. God knows best." There are the poets who averted wrath or provoked it with their wit, one of whom wrote of his tooth, a boon companion, that "whilst we were together I never saw him; and when he appeared before my eyes, we had parted for ever." The humor of this Persian miscellany is compounded of its original wit, the translator's quaint Englishing, and Mr. Lucas's own tolerant smile which leads him to modern interludes. He has something of the attitude of a collector toward wit. It stands him in good stead in his exploration of Ibn Kallikan's vagaries; but when he comes, as in the later part of the volume, to his own observations and fancies, the reader feels a little as if wit had died and Mr. Lucas were conducting a tour among its remains in a museum. He is not entirely free of the sin of anecdote and his smile of tolerance becomes finally a trifle irritating. One craves more passionate loves and fiercer hates, untinctured with the entirely fanciful and the entirely literary. The sketch entitled "*The Listener*," in which he tells of leaning against a lamp-post and overhearing the conversation among the letters in the post-box, is of schoolboy triviality. One is grateful for the amusing correspondence entitled "*The Puttenhams*," in which members of an ancient family express various degrees of indignation and triumph at the frankness of a newly published genealogy. Always Mr. Lucas is master of a gracious style, but he does not always trouble to use it. Sometimes it seems almost as if he wrote in weariness. That is perhaps due to his having written some of these sketches in haste for periodicals. In that case they should have been excluded from this charming volume, or at least more completely altered than they have been.

Mr. J. C. Snaith loves his aristocrats, especially the crabbed old ones, far too well to risk their unhappiness under the present democratic crisis; and in his latest novel "*The Time Spirit*" (Appleton; \$1.50), he comes to their rescue, rearranging their patrician existences to the new

order. In so doing he betrays praiseworthy ingenuity in bringing his story-teller's bag of tricks up to the minute, although when all is said and done it is the same mid-Victorian stock that has in the past firmly established him in the affections of lovers of romance. This present story starts with a foggy night, a foundling, a London Bobby and . . . it is needless to enumerate further. With such a start it is inevitable that the foundling turn out of incomparable beauty, that she enjoy a dazzling career (the stage of course), and end with wedding-bells and the strawberry leaf in her coronet. Whatever the political mode of the day, Mr. Snaith knows full well that emotions are the same and that their response is the same under a democratic as under an autocratic dispensation. Students of social history will not be convinced that Mr. Snaith has made an illuminating contribution to the subject, but summer students of fiction will be satisfied to the full.

It is rather surprising to find that a writer of bracing fiction has taken to pointing morals, but that is just what Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch has done in his "*Foe-Farrell*" (Macmillan; \$1.50). Luckily, if you are the sort of person who does not like morals, you can skip the last page or two, and your impression of the whole novel, breezy and thoroughly fascinating as it is, will be unimpaired by the cloud of conscientiousness. Imagine two men hating each other heartily. One is the more or less direct cause of the loss of the other's experimental results of a lifetime. In revenge—and it is a much more diabolical one than it seems—the second dogs the footsteps of the first over land and sea, for thousands of miles, until they are cast upon a desert island, the sole survivors of a wrecked ship. Then their identities become slowly and dreadfully interchanged. As for horror, the novel bears more than a slight resemblance to "*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*," to which it has been likened, but the development is so much more subtle that the story gives a curiously different impression of fantastic reality. As a novel of adventure and invention it is a great success.

"*Captain Gault*," by William Hope Hodgson (McBride; \$1.35), is a collection of ingenious adventure tales spiced with the inimitable tang of the sea. In their knowledge of men and women they display a kind of whimsical wizardry. Whether dealing with secret societies, Chinese curio merchants, or pretty millionaire widows, Gault is a discriminating student of human nature. Except that "student" seems entirely too sedate an epithet for the rollicking sea captain with a penchant for smuggling and the dare-devil effrontery which escapes unscathed. A debonair faith in the eternal romance of life and in his own favor with the gods seems to

underlie the genial Captain's tempting of fate. His pay is a "trifle watery" but there are "little ways of making ends meet," and these little ways the story-teller demonstrates capably. Under the very eyes of the customs officers he defies their watchfulness. His exploits are well known and the patrols force him into corners, but he always eludes detection. The net seems all about him, but the wary Captain suddenly turns a trick and laughs at his pursuers; and the reader laughs with him. It makes good vacation reading.

"Long Ever Ago," by Rupert Hughes (Harcourt's; \$1.40), is a slight but gay book. It consists of several tales of the Irish in America, briskly told, but with a genuine sympathetic touch. The author is familiar with the subtleties of the Celtic temperament, and he does not make the common mistake of harping too persistently on the humorous string. Nor does he overdo those platitudes that are less genuinely Irish than born of the stage—those capricious offsprings of the belief which still lingers that your Irishman is only graded by the making of the "Irish bull." Mr. Hughes has written a pleasant little book of stories, and he knows his material sufficiently well to bring a reminiscent smile to his reader—provided, of course, the reader also is familiar with the psychology of transplanted Erin.

"His Daughter," by Gouverneur Morris (Scribner; \$1.35), is the account of a young man's awakening sex-consciousness, of his unwholesome sophistication, and his eventual regeneration. The story is slow in getting under way and the first half is rather ineffectually occupied with the banalities of young love. Frederick Dayton is an athletic college youth with a frank American personality which proves irresistibly fascinating to women. On his way to Paris to study landscape gardening he meets and falls in love with Dorothy Grandison, a pretty, unspoiled girl of fifteen. He has never been in love before. He feels that he is taking an unfair advantage of his sweetheart's youth, but he has not the will to break off his attention. However, we are told that with him absence did not make the heart grow fonder. Quite the contrary. Consequently, after Dorothy has left Paris at her mother's insistence, Dayton finds the pangs of separation speedily mitigated by the charms of Claire D'Avril, the pretty owner of a Paris newsstand. He falls in love with Claire, moves her into his studio, and dreads the time when he will have to see Dorothy again. With the introduction of this devoted mistress, the story gains momentum and discernment. Dayton is called to America by his mother's impending death. Claire returns to the studio and learns of her lover's hasty departure, but she fails to

find the money and the letter he has left her. Through petty enmity his other letters are intercepted and Claire goes on alone, bravely struggling to remain true to Dayton's memory and to rear her child in innocence. . . . In America Dayton meets Dorothy, finds himself more in love with her than ever, and marries her in spite of his secret hatred of his unworthiness. Other amours follow. Though Dayton always respects his wife, he is not satisfied with her love and is continually unfaithful. His adoration for their little daughter touches Dorothy and she forgives his vice. The war affords the author an opportunity to plunge his immoral hero into a baptism of fire for physical and spiritual regeneration. The reformation seems a trifle precipitate, though prepared for in a measure by the shock of the daughter's death. On the whole, the novel is not up to the best work of Mr. Morris. There is too much explanation of motives and emotions, and not enough realization of these in suggestive and illuminating action. Claire D'Avril seems the most human of the characters.

"The Queen's Heart," by J. H. Hildreth (Marshall Jones; \$1.50), is described on the jacket as being "a good old-fashioned romance" written twenty-five years ago. Such candor in announcing the contents of a novel is welcome. In the opening chapter a likable hero and heroine, in order to escape the ennui prevailing aboard a becalmed sailing yacht, decide to row out a mile or two to examine a derelict. One is quite prepared for a proposal aboard the derelict, but not for what follows. A sudden storm sweeps down upon them and carries them out to sea, where the following day, when they are picked up by a mysterious vessel, their adventures begin. What follows is in the realm of the improbable and melodramatic, but the author leads us on so gently that the transition from the commonplace to the fantastic is rather like ascent in an aeroplane. The reader does not observe that he has left the terra firma of reality until he is aloft in fantasy, and the exhilaration is such that he then willingly abandons himself to the adventure. He is wise to do so, for Mr. Hildreth is a skilful pilot and knows regions of adventure which are largely unexplored. In the case of this novel the term "old-fashioned romance" is the mark of sterling.

Those who have a taste for that species of fiction, known as "serial," which flourishes in the cheaper English newspapers may find "The White Rook," by J. B. Harris-Bourland (Knopf; \$1.35), to their liking. In conception the story is ingenious; in execution, slovenly. Mysterious murders, suicides, and attempted poisonings are no longer the only ingredients required to make a good mystery story.

CASUAL COMMENT

OUR MOVING-PICTURES, OR RATHER OUR photo-dramas, are the despair of acute foreign observers. The curiously persistent conventions about human sentiment and human affections, the unreal grimaces, the rigid and artificial pattern of the fable, the conventionalization—all these make the immense standardization of our moving-picture industry just that much more menacing. If it were not for its sweep and drive, one would not be concerned about the effect of moving-pictures. Yet the despair of the foreign observer, although explicable, is not entirely justified. If one recalls the photo-dramas of even five years ago, one finds the development striking. Of course it is a development largely in externals; that is, in lighting, skill in arrangement of the chiaroscuro effects, a more flexible technique, and so on. The costumes have improved immeasurably; the schemes of interior decoration are less absurd; the taste in mere details of decoration is less offensive; the feeling for aesthetic possibilities in out-of-door scenes is pronounced.

SOCIOLOGY WAS FOR A LONG TIME BARREN OF anything except the vaguest of generalizations and the most far-fetched of analogies, until its exponents acquired an extensive psychological background. Then it became fruitful and susceptible to practical application. Books like "Human Nature in Politics" and "The Great Society," as noteworthy and important books of their kind as we possess, were pioneers precisely for that reason. For the first time the organized body of knowledge brought together by the psychologists was employed to sharpen and clarify current concepts about our community life. Many myths and phantasies of our thought retreated before this scientific attack. Certain loose theories became henceforth impossible for the thinker of any intellectual integrity; and if the field of speculation was limited in one sense, in another it was broadened, for freedom of initiative and inventiveness was enhanced within the more rigidly defined limits of the possible. Today it is clear that sociological thinking would be made even more fruitful by employing the illuminations which anthropology provides in ever increasing abundance. Some scholar with the adequate background and training, together with the necessary literary skill, needs to do for anthropology precisely what Graham Wallas did for psychology—bring it into the open and put it to work. Sociology needs imperatively the discipline of anthropological fact. For with the war there has come a recrudescence of the vicious kind of sociological speculation which the new training of sociologists in the psychology of behavior had to a certain extent destroyed. Most

of this popular and flabby generalizing about "races" and "bloods" and "hostile groups"—such as we have par excellence in a writer like Houston Chamberlain—springs from downright ignorance of the simplest validated truths of anthropology. For example, it is considered the shrewd and scholarly thing to say of Russia that her attempts at a sociological experiment of a totally new kind in the history of the world are "abortive." It is considered the correct reading of the theory of evolution, so respectable a theory that no one dare dispute it. It is assumed that nations must pass through successive stages from the simple to the complex. "How can Russia," these writers ask, "expect to jump from the eighteenth century to the twenty-second? Must she not pass through the mercantile, the industrial, the economic development which the more highly organized and more experienced democracies of the West have had to undergo? Must not the new grow out of the old? Would not any other development be mere caprice in what we know, scientifically, to be an orderly world?" The answer is that anthropology is largely the history of just this type of caprice. There is nothing in the facts which it discloses to justify any of these questions. Given a fortunate start, the lucky instrument of a popular will which is determined that it shall be so, and there is nothing in the history of mankind to show that the Russian experiment is foredoomed to failure. On the contrary, anthropology would tend to make one optimistic about its chance for success. Examples of this kind might be multiplied. Especially needed is the corrective of scientific anthropological knowledge to those speculating about the natural differences between the various races at war—for here ignorance and unreason is the general rule. THE DIAL hopes that such a type of book may speedily be written. The opportunity is great, the need imperative.

MARGARET DELAND IN THE JULY ISSUE OF "Harper's Magazine" has written an article which is as remarkable for its structural design as for its insight and its extraordinary transvaluation of the conventional moralistic values of the war into straightforward human values. It is noteworthy because it is a beginning: heretofore most of our writers have been special pleaders, even without knowing it, earnest and a little pathetic in their attempts to acclimatize us to the fact of war. But Miss Deland does not assume a naïve audience—just as our other writers, bit by bit, will realize that emotionally the war has long since come home to us. This will give our men and women of letters a greater margin of real freedom; they will not spend three-fourths of their time attempting to induce a mood which already we can apperceive intuitively.

ively. Yet striking as the article is as a symbol of the psychological change taking place in all of us to a greater or less extent, it has a special literary significance. What our school rhetorics used to call "unity of impression" cannot be attained by any method susceptible to definition by formula. Miss Deland, for example, wishes to convey the impression of bewilderment and expectancy, the sense of waiting, waiting for some triumphant happening to justify the present terrors of inarticulate fear just below the threshold of consciousness, tapping ever stronger at the thin shell which divides the outer normality from the massive and irrational inner life, and of the dread that this dumb fear may some day break its chains and strangle us in despair. To convey this so as to sustain the curious unity of impression which she has successfully maintained in her article would hardly be accomplished by employing the conventional essay form. It is more than probable that she was not fully aware of this, although the title of her article, "Beads," and its sub-title, "War-Time Reflections in Paris," suggests that Miss Deland knew that her work was not the ordinary impressionistic essay. And the title is particularly happy. There are beads of many colors on her string, crimson and black and crystal, but the black beads predominate—black, the color of fear. Thus she can thread together her own doubts and hopes, mere incidents, the doubts and hopes of others. It is a remarkable pattern in its singleness and strength, its inner unity. For the cord on which the beads are strung is as fine as silken thread, but a thread which is never broken.

who have some political decency left, raised in their turn an equally frantic cry. The majority Socialists even threatened not to vote the budget. Third: no sooner was Admiral von Hintze appointed than the Chancellor arose and delivered a long speech in which he said, "I will direct the line of foreign policy," and "We have no intention to keep Belgium in any form whatever." But this was a great victory for the moderates, an even greater because the reactionaries had reason to believe that with Admiral von Hintze appointed everything was now clear sailing. Yet the speech of the Chancellor was circulated in the Allied countries with the passage referring to Belgium deliberately omitted. And then took place the last act of the political drama. Fourth: the next day the censored passage was sent out by wireless official statement. What happened during that twenty-four hours is now, in the light of the preceding events, fairly obvious. On the conclusion of the Chancellor's speech the reactionaries must have been in a frightful temper. As they controlled the General Staff, including the military censorship over the news service, they took what revenge they could by so deleting from the speech that the horrible moderation in the German attitude towards Belgium—"moderation," needless to say, as they understand the word—would not be revealed to the world. Yet once more their political opponents brought pressure to bear on the Government, and the passage was published. A sort of indirect confirmation of the accuracy of this interpretation was almost immediately afterwards furnished by Arthur Henderson, when, speaking at Northampton on July 13, he declared that "it also seems clear that the German majority Socialists accept virtually all the principles of the inter-Allied memorandum. All of which shows that the political strife within Germany has reached a stage of fruitful bitterness. There is a clear division between an extremist and a moderate policy, and each policy has its body of powerful followers. If this be 'unity,' then it is of the kind of which the Allies, with a little shrewd diplomacy, can take tremendous advantage. With the stage so obviously set for a battle royal of domestic politics within Germany, our leaders should do nothing to throw the prospective combatants into each other's arms. In due course, we hope, President Wilson will, as he so often has done in the past, give exactly the type of speech calculated to fan the flames of German internal strife. Already this internal strife appears to have delayed the renewal of the grand offensive. When that offensive is finally defeated, a remarkable diplomatic opportunity will probably be presented to us—an opportunity to shatter the morale of the enemy. And in the long run, as General Smuts has said, the winning of the war is a question of morale.

COMMUNICATION

MISGUIDED YOUNG LIONS.
(To the Editor of THE DIAL.)

Will you not do me the courtesy and the justice to inform your readers that I did not "identify," or intend to characterise, Justice Brandeis as a Bolshevik, and that I did not speak of Miss Jane Addams as Jane Addams? The explanation that "Professor Shorey refers to the flag of Bolshevism" is an inspiration of the reporter, presumably the same reporter who asked me if "that Norman Angell you talked about was the Professor Angell at your University." My opinions of Russian literature are the outcome of forty years of uncritical reading—in translation. If I am ever so rash as to print them I shall be resigned in anticipation to the assaults of your young lions who, for reasons undivinable by me, never miss an opportunity to "slate" me. But until, or unless I do print them, permit me to express my regret that so intelligent a journal as, in spite of its deplorable opinions, I acknowledge *THE DIAL* to be, is willing to take as its text a newspaper report of a professor's utterances. There is a sufficiency of material in authentic print. And surely you must be aware that, even if correctly reported, a few sentences wrenched from their context and put into unintended juxtapositions, cannot give a fair impression of a paper which was merely an uninspired professor's endeavor not to bore beyond endurance an audience of ladies and gentlemen. In my own case the reporting never is correct—not even when, lest worse things should befall me, I lend my manuscript to the reporter for a few minutes. Newspapers do not send experts to report professors of Greek. I remain, with chastened resignation,

Very truly yours,
PAUL SHOREY.

The University of Chicago.

NOTES AND NEWS

THE DIAL is now established in its New York offices, at 152 West Thirteenth Street, to which all communications should hereafter be addressed. As announced in the last number, its custom of publishing one issue each in July and August will be adhered to this summer. The August number will appear on the twentieth. There will be two issues in September—the Fall Educational Number, September 5, and the Fall Announcement Number, September 19. Beginning October 3 publication will be weekly.

The works of James Branch Cabell, who writes upon Francois Villon in this issue, were discussed at length by Wilson Follett in *THE DIAL* for April 25.

The other contributors to this number have previously written for *THE DIAL*.

This month the John Lane Co. are publishing the "Life and Works of Ozias Humphry, R. A.," by George C. Williamson, in an edition limited to 400 copies for England and America.

The Authors' Clipping Bureau has moved its offices from Boston to Room 538, Munsey Building, Washington, D. C.

The Four Seas Co. announce for fall publication a new volume by Richard Aldington, to be entitled "Love and War."

Thomas Capek, author of "Bohemia under Hapsburg Misrule," has compiled a "Bohemian Bibliography," published by the Revell Co.

"New York and Other Verses," by Frederick Mortimer Clapp, is on the summer list of the Marshall Jones Co.

The Scribners have postponed until fall the publication of Professor Edgar James Swift's "Psychology and the Day's Work."

"Injurious Insects and Useful Birds," by F. L. Washburn, Professor of Entomology in the University of Minnesota, is the latest addition to the "Lippincott Farm Manuals."

The McBride summer list includes "Finding the Worth While in the Southwest," by Charles Francis Saunders, and a new edition of Edward Frank Allen's "Guide to the National Parks of America."

The Woman's Press announces that "The Young Woman Citizen," by Mary Austin, has been so delayed in manufacture that the mounting cost of materials has made it necessary to increase the price to \$1.35.

Alfred A. Knopf has just published "Pavannes and Divisions," a collection of prose pieces by Ezra Pound. Besides contemporary criticisms it includes a study of the troubadour and of Provencal conditions in the twelfth century.

Witter Bynner's "Grenstone Poems," which Swinburne Hale reviewed in *THE DIAL* for January 3, has been adjudged by the Columbia Committee in charge of the award of the Poetry Society prize to be one of the two best books of poetry published in 1917.

The Doran list for July includes: "From Bapaume to Paschendaele," by Philip Gibbs; "The British Campaign in France and Flanders," Vol. III, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle; "Ten Months in a German Raider," by Captain John Stanley Cameron; "Why Prohibition?" by Charles Stelzle; "The Hive," by Will Lexington Comfort; and "High Altars," by John Oxenham.

P. J. Kennedy & Sons have been authorized by the Vatican to publish in this country the complete edition of "Codex Juris Canonici," the official text of the New Canon Law of the Catholic Church, and announce that it will be issued next month. In the autumn they will issue a facsimile of the last edition (1913) of the "Missale Romanum," which has been out of print for some time.

For August, Little, Brown & Co. announce: "The Government of the British Empire," by Edward Jenks; "The Cradle of the War," by H. Charles Wood; "Virtuous Wives," a novel by Owen Johnson; and a volume of selections from the works of Admiral Mahan, "Mahan on Naval Warfare," to be edited by Allan Westcott, of the Naval Academy.

Two more authors, hitherto hidden behind pseudonyms, have been revealed by their publishers. Henry Holt & Co. are issuing a second edition of "Professor Latimer's Progress," (which originally appeared in the "Atlantic" as "The Professor's

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"Progress,") with Simeon Strunsky's name on the title-page. And the George H. Doran Co. admit that "Ajax," author of "The German Pirate: His Methods and Record," is Professor W. M. Dixon, of the University of Glasgow.

The July publications of D. Appleton & Co. include: "Camps and Trails in China," by Roy C. and Yvette Borup Andrews; "The Rise of the Spanish American Republics," by William Spence Robertson; "Fighting France," by Stephane Lanzanne, editor of "Le Matin"; "A Reporter at Armageddon," by Will Irwin; a romance by Agnes and Edgerton Castle, "Minniglen"; and "Uncle Abner—Master of Mysteries," by Melville Davisson Post.

The American-Scandinavian Foundation has appointed nine Fellows for special study in American colleges during the academic year 1918-9, four from Norway, three from Denmark, and two from Sweden. Because of war conditions no scholarships have this year been awarded Americans for study in Scandinavia. The usual subvention has been granted the publications of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies, as well as a number of smaller stipends for study in America.

Dr. James Brown Scott, author of "A Survey of International Relations Between the United States and Germany," which appeared early in the year, has now prepared a companion volume, "President Wilson's Foreign Policy: A Collection of Messages, Addresses, and Letters." Another companion volume—"The Diplomatic Correspondence Between the United States and Germany; August 1, 1914 to April 6, 1917"—is in train for early issue. The Oxford University Press publishes all three.

E. P. Dutton & Co. announce the American publication of "Industrial Reconstruction," an English symposium conducted and edited by Huntly Carter. The contributors include G. K. Chesterton, Havellock Ellis, Hilaire Belloc, Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, George Russell, and others. The Duttons also announce for early issue an American symposium, somewhat similar in method, to be called "American Problems in Reconstruction." The contributors will include Irving Fisher, Charles M. Schwab, Frank W. Taussig, Edwin A. Clapp, George W. Perkins, E. R. A. Seligman, and others. The general editor of the latter volume is Elisha M. Friedman, of the Council of National Defense.

"Modern Art," by Charles Marriott, and "The Constitutional and Parliamentary History of Ireland," by J. G. Swift McNeil, are among this month's issues by the Frederick A. Stokes Co. Three volumes are now ready in their "New Commonwealth Series," which is devoted to discussions by some of the younger English liberals about problems connected with after-the-war reconstruction: "The World of States," by C. Delisle Burns; "The Church in the Commonwealth," by Richard Roberts; and "Freedom," by Gilbert Cannan. Volumes in preparation for this series are: "The State and Industry," by G. H. D. Cole, author of "The World of Labour"; "The State and Woman," by Maude Royden; "The State and Education," by Dr. Percy Nunn, of the University of London; "The State and the Child" and "The State and the Criminal," by W. Clarke Hall, Juvenile Court Magistrate at the Old Street Police Court, London.

by

Norman Angell

The Political Conditions of Allied Success

A Plea for the Protective Consolidation of Democracies

"If we scattered democracies," says the author, "are to use our power effectively against a group of States geographically contiguous, and unified militarily and politically by the predominant power of one member, we must achieve a unification equally effective."

Mr. Angell points out how this unity may be achieved.

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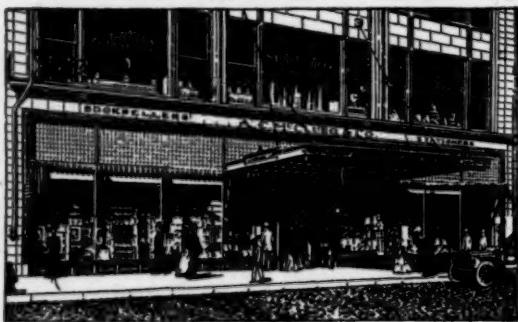
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Author of
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Memories,"
"The
German
Struggle
for
Liberty,"
etc.

The author draws a close analogy between Genseric and his Vandal hordes of the fifth century and the masters of Prussianism today. This ancient chief of militarism who sacked Rome, and with wild wantonness plundered, devastated, spread horror, in all countries lining the Mediterranean shores, is compared favorably with the "All Highest" of central Europe today.

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See the chapter on Chicago, page 43, "Your United States," by Arnold Bennett

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LIST OF NEW BOOKS

[The following list, containing 118 titles, includes books received by THE DIAL since its last issue.]

THE WAR

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Review

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—From the National Service Number

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Published by the

AMERICAN-SCANDINAVIAN FOUNDATION
25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.

Yearly subscription \$1.50

Single copies 25 cents